This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VAGAMUNDO.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VAGAMUNDO;

OR THE

ATTACHÉ IN SPAIN:

INCLUDING A BRIEF EXCURSION INTO THE EMPIRE OF MOROCCO.

BY

JOHN ESAIAS WARREN.

"Oh lovely Spain! renown'd, romantic land,"—BYRON.

NEW YORK:
CHARLES SCRIBNER, 145 NASSAU STREET
1851.

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
465073 A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1930 L

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1851, by
CHARLES SCRIBNER,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

C. W. BENEDICT,
STEREOTYPER AND PRINTER,
201 William st., N Y.

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

In presenting the following work to the public, its Author has no apologies whatever to advance. Uninfluenced, he trusts, by motives of mere personal vanity, he deliberately consigns the results of a peculiar experience to the ocean of popular favour, in the humble hope that his endeavors to entertain his countrymen with a record of the interesting scenes that he witnessed in old, romantic Spain, shall not have been undertaken wholly in vain.

In company with Mr. Barringer (our estimable Minister at the Court of Madrid), the Author left the United States in the summer of 1849, as an "attaché" of the Legation. Having remained

Digitized by Google

several months at the Spanish capital, he passed into the south, sojourning, principally, at the delightful cities of Seville, Cadiz, and Granada, where, in truth, life seemed to him more like a dream than a reality. The remembrance of those days can never pass from his mind; and often, amid the green and stately forests of his own land, the mantle of revery falls upon him, and once more he breathes the sunny air of Spain—once more he treads her magic haunts: a tranquil firmament expands above him, while giant hills and craggy mountain-peaks unfold their shadowy forms, like pencilled figures on the distant sky. He hears again the mellow song, and listens to the tinkling of the sweet guitar. The tripping of light feet, and the clicking of merry castanets, are in his ear; while before him glides a dancing throng of lovely maids, with eyes and hair of jetty hue.

Thus does fancy revert to the land of music, of mirth and of gay romance; to the land where Columbus dreamed, where the chivalrous Cortez died, and over which the illustrious Ferdinand and Isabella reigned.

That these recollections of a great, but fallen nation, may serve to direct attention to a mag-

Digitized by Google

nificent country and a heroic people—to excite admiration for the one, and sympathies for the other, is the Author's sincere and ardent prayer.

NEW YORK, *July* 12, 1851.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

PAGE

CHAPTER I.

Journey from the French frontier to the City of Madrid, . 15

CHAPTER II.

Impressions of Madrid—The Royal Palace—the "Prado" and "Museo," - - - - - - - - - - 27

CHAPTER III.

Our Spanish Teacher—A Dancing Intrigue—Description of a Bull Fight, - - - - - - - - - - 36

CHAPTER IV.

State of Society in Madrid, and Causes of its Corruption, - 46

Digitized by Google

PAGE

CHAPTER V.

Description of an Excursion to the Monastery of the Escurial, 53

CHAPTER VI.

The Gardens and Fountains of La Granja, or San Ildefonzo, - 66

CHAPTER VII.

Account of Segovia, and the Romantic Incidents which there befel us, - - - - - - - - - - - 78

CHAPTER VIII.

A peep into the "Oriental Saloons"—Extraordinary Female Visitation—Our Presentation at Court—Dinner with the Prime Minister, and Ball at the Palace of Queen Christina, 93

CHAPTER IX.

Trip to Toledo—The "Olla Podrida"—The Fair Teresina—Curiosities and Wonders of the City, - - - - 109

CHAPTER X.

Our Return to "the Happy Valley of the Castiles," and Journey from thence to the City of Seville, - - - - 123

Digitized by Google

PAGE

CHAPTER XI.

An Epitome of Sevillian History, with Brief Notices of the Cathedral and Exchange, - - - - - - - 135

CHAPTER XII.

The Mysteries of the Alcazar, and Tobacco Factory of Seville —An Interesting Relic of the Holy Inquisition—Delightful Stroll upon the Guadalquiver, - - - - - - 145

CHAPTER XIII.

Style of the Buildings—The Tertulia and Spanish Etiquette—Pictures by Murillo—Barabbas and the Pretty Sash Maker —A Novel Auction Scene—Shaving Operation—A Peep at the Dances and Dancers of Seville, - - - - - 157

CHAPTER XIV.

Excursion to the Ruins of Italica—The Birthplace of Hernan Cortez—House of Correction for Unfaithful Wives—A Characteristic Incident, - - - - - - - - 171

Digitized by Google

PAGE

CHAPTER XV.

Trip down the Guadalquiver, and Description of Cadiz and the Carnival, - - - - - - - - - - - 178

CHAPTER XVI.

A Day at Xerez—Passage through the Straits—Scenes and Incidents at Gibraltar—Journey to Tangiers in Morocco, by way of Tarifa, - - - - - - - - - - 195

CHAPTER XVII.

A Brief Epitome of Scenes and Incidents among the Moors, - 216

CHAPTER XVIII.

Glimpse of Malaga, and Horseback Excursion to Granada, - 241

CHAPTER XIX

A Peep at the Alhambra, and Week spent amid the Wild Scenes and Voluptuous Delights of Granada, - - - 255

Digitized by Google

PAGE

CHAPTER XX.

Departure from Granada and Journey by Sea to Valencia—Scenes in the Romantic City of the Cid, and Journey from thence to Barcelona—The Festival of "Corpus Christi," and the Author's Farewell to Spain and the Reader, - - 276

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

VAGAMUNDO;

OR,

THE ATTACHE IN SPAIN.

CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY FROM THE FRENCH FRONTIER TO THE CITY OF MADRID.

Give me your ear, kind reader, while from the gentle quiet of my unpretending home, I detail to you the various scenes which transpired, and incidents that befel me, while an adventurous wanderer in the land of Spain. Although less visited, perhaps, by the pleasure-seeking traveller, than any other European country, yet not one presents stronger inducements to the genuine lover of fine scenery, or enterprising student in antiquarian research. Her name has a peculiar charm—it fires the imagination, and rouses within us all the romance and chivalry of our nature. We long to tread the ground rendered famous by

Digitized by Google

the bloody battles between the Christians and the Moors, and to visit the spots rendered magical by Cervantes, and consecrated by the immortal genius of Le Sage. He who undertakes, however, to carry his erratic desires into execution, must previously enter into a pious determination neither to be greatly disturbed by the numerous vexations he will meet with, nor discouraged by any unforeseen obstacles that may beset him in the prosecution of his journey. He must resolve to view everything in a spirit of good humour, unless he wishes to sacrifice to his own peculiar prejudices and opinions, the many enjoyments which he might otherwise secure.

In no country is good-nature more absolutely indispensable than in Spain. Let him, to whom the generous fates have vouchsafed this precious boon—this sacred talisman, which converts whatever it touches into gold—let him, I say, thank heaven for the inestimable treasure it has bestowed, for a gift inexhaustible in its resources, and which will ever tend to lighten the burden of the brain and heart, and strew the rugged pathway of life with sparkling gems and fragrant flowers! But to him who is naturally peevish and fretful, who is more disposed to pick out a single grain of fault than to regard a peck of merit—who is never willing to allow any noble quality in another of which he himself is utterly deficient; and who, on the other hand, firmly believes that every evil tendency which he finds existing in his own breast, is aggravated a hundredfold in the

Digitized by Google

bosom of every other individual—a person of this description, wherever else he may travel, should never for a moment dream of entering Spain. If he does so, he may be certain of encountering disappointment at every step; the phantom of pleasure may flit across his way, but only to taunt and perplex him with her deceitful presence. He may strive to clasp her in his selfish embrace, but she will elude his efforts and fly away before him. The wily goddess is not thus to be caught: *those who pursue her* in eager chase are always mocked by her rapid and untiring flight—she is to them a laughing coquette, who repels while she attracts. It is only upon those *who seek her not* that she bestows her favors: to such she is a gentle companion, a sincere and ardent friend!

It was in the month of October, 1849, that we secured seats in the diligence at Bayonne, and started on our journey towards the lone and isolated capital of Spain. On account of the mildness of the weather, and for the sake of the extensive views of the country that would thus be afforded us, Victor B. and myself resolved to take our positions in the *berlina*, in preference to the interior of the vehicle. For the especial edification of those who are unacquainted with the different parts of a Spanish diligence, it will be as well to state, that the berlina is a seat constructed on the top and provided with a leather covering like that of a *buggy*, which can be raised or depressed at pleasure. The view in front is of course wholly unobstructed, though in rainy weather the aperture may be entirely closed by means of a heavy curtain, which

Digitized by Google

is provided for this purpose. The berlina is really quite a snug place, and decidedly to be recommended to those who take any particular interest in the appearance and scenery of the country through which they are passing. All that is required is an agreeable companion; and with such, beneficent fortune had already supplied me. Should these pages ever meet his eye, he will perchance smile at the romantic recollections of by-gone days—days which to us will never return again. How many hours have we sung and laughed, and smoked and talked together, and how many wild incidents and strange adventures have bound us to each other's memory with "hooks of steel!"

The transition from France to Spain was both sudden and striking. The usual blending of scenery and character which exists upon a frontier, we did not here perceive. As soon as we had crossed the little stream, which constitutes the line of demarcation between the two countries, we felt that we were actually in Spain, and this feeling was certainly very far from being disagreeable. Our pulses perceptibly increased the number of their beats, and our spirits at once ascended to a high point of hilarity.

We were in the very Spain of Don Quixote and Gil Blas, and a life of rare adventure opened in perspective before our eager vision. Mules, mantillas, and balconies, confusedly rushed through our minds, and filled our fancy with a strange variety of ridiculous conceits and incongruous images. We were waxing heroic, and were quite ready for anything

Digitized by Google

in the shape of an adventure (whether to fight banditti or make love to charming senhoritas,) when our diligence suddenly stopped at the town of Irun, for the purpose of a custom-house examination—that most abominable of all "bores" to a poetical traveller. Our romantic ideas took flight in an instant. We found the officers, however, very civil, particularly to those who honored them with a small fee for their important services: by-the-way, no more certain auxiliary towards winning the hearts of these gentry was ever devised, than that of presenting them with a few choice cigars. This is an offer which no Spaniard was ever known to refuse, and one which never fails in producing a placid effect upon the disposition of the individual to whom it is tendered.

The town of Irun has rather a picturesque aspect, and the surrounding scenery is of a bold and impressive character. The streets are narrow, crooked, and badly paved; the houses lofty, and well supplied with balconies; while, in regard to its women, the few damsels we saw gliding through the streets, had their faces so completely enveloped in their light and airy mantillas, that nothing but their sparkling black eyes could be discerned.

Having finally made our escape from the custom-house officers of Irun, we proceeded with a train of ten powerful mules to St. Sebastian, this being the next town we were to pass through on our route. A fine breeze was blowing freshly from "Biscay's sleepless Bay," and not a single cloud

Digitized by Google

dimmed the clear azure of the tranquil firmament above us. Nature seemed wrapt in dream-like stillness and repose. The road continued excellent, and was occasionally skirted with ornamental trees. Now and then it wound round the bases of sloping hills in graceful and harmonious curves. By the side of the highway we frequently caught glimpses of wooden crosses, which usually serve to point out the spot where some traveller has met with a violent end, either from murder or acute disease. The general aspect of the country was that of wildness and extreme solitude. We did not notice a single human habitation, until the town of St. Sebastian, in all its romantic and picturesque beauty, burst suddenly upon our vision. This curious town is built upon a small isthmus, and stands at the base of a conical hill, which rises to the height of above four thousand feet, and is crested with a venerable-looking castle, adding not a little to the picturesque beauty of the landscape.

From its convenient situation, St. Sebastian is much resorted to at certain seasons of the year, for the purposes both of sporting and sea-bathing. Its adjacent scenery is mountainous and romantic. As we tarried at this town merely an hour, (principally devoted to the mastication of a sorry meal,) our own experience of it is but slight and unsatisfactory. We were in fact glad to get out of it, and to resume our journey once more through the open country. All day long we rolled onward, at a respectable pace, halting only at wretched hamlets for the sake of changing our jaded mules.

Digitized by Google

In the evening we reached the city of Tolosa. Here we stopped to dine. The repast savoured strongly of oil and garlick, but as we were as keen as a couple of famished wolves, we did complete justice to the meal, wretched as it was. Lighting our cigars, we ensconced ourselves in the berlina as comfortably as possible for the night.

The moon had not yet risen, though the canopy of heaven was profusely sprinkled with stars, which on this evening seemed to shine with extraordinary brilliancy. A young Frenchman who had taken a seat with us, being somewhat of a musician, sang for us with a considerable degree of power and sweetness, several airs from favourite operas. We were but little in the mood for sleep, so we chatted together all the night of "days that had been," and happy hours that were yet to come. The excitement of our novel situation, and the agitation of our own thoughts, kept us constantly awake; yet the winged moments flew rapidly away, without producing either stupor or fatigue. The wildness and strangeness of the scenery, so different from what we had elsewhere seen, gently excited our imagination, and aroused the fitful images of dreaming fancy. So steep were some of the hills we were obliged to cross, that oxen were several times called into requisition. On one occasion, I remember, we had no less than ten of these Herculean animals attached to our diligence, besides our usual complement of nine mules and a horse. This, as can be readily supposed, was one of those indescribably ludicrous spectacles, which neither man nor

Digitized by Google

saint can look upon without a smile! Never was my mind more palpably confused between the sublime and ridiculous than at that moment.

Certainly, no earthly scene can be more impressive, to one of an imaginative disposition, than a still and starlight night among the everlasting rock-bound hills of Spain. The very breeze, as it steals with noiseless footstep down the sloping side of some shadowy mountain, seems like the spirit of superstition taking her lonely midnight walk throughout this silent land. The crosses, which at intervals glimmer upon the watchful sight, appear like the ghosts of the *murdered*, stretching out their long arms by the way-side, as if to warn the solitary traveller of impending danger. In every glen we behold the haunt of some bloody robber, and from behind every straggling tree we anticipate his desperate spring, and expect to see the lightning gleam of his thirsty stiletto!

Absorbed in reflections of this nature, and entertained with social converse, the hours of darkness glided peacefully and swiftly by. A faint tinge along the eastern horizon, which gradually deepened into a gorgeous crimson, announced at length the approach of dawn. We were now in the centre of an extensive plain, surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains, and proceeding on at a lively pace through an arched avenue of trees towards a strange and imposing city, which, with its numerous spires and towers, stood in striking relief upon the summit of a considerable

Digitized by Google

hill but a short distance before us. This was the city of Vittoria—the capital of the province of Alava. This place contains a population of about twelve thousand souls, and has many large and handsome edifices. Its streets present quite a gay and animated appearance, while its *alamedas* or public promenades are tastefully laid out, and well supplied with statuary and fountains. Food being here remarkably cheap, the hungry traveller may calculate upon a comparatively good meal; and if he be a smoker, I would hint to him in a friendly manner, to lay in at this place a sufficient stock of cigars for the remainder of his journey, as it is the only town on the route where he will be able to obtain even *tolerable* ones.

Again setting forth, we soon reached Miranda, an uninviting town, of two thousand inhabitants, situated upon the frontier of the Castiles. Here our passports were re-examined, and our trunks re-opened by a swarm of custom-house officials. As soon as this disagreeable business was ended, we crossed a stone bridge spanning the River Ebro. The country now presented a more cultivated and fertile appearance; though the general aspect of the scenery, however, was that of melancholy and desolation. No incidents occurred to fasten the day in our memory, but towards evening we beheld in the distance the dim form of a mighty edifice, with its forest of filigree pinnacles gilded by the rays of the setting sun. It was the famous Cathedral of Burgos. We entered the city through a long and shady *alameda*, thronged

Digitized by Google

with young people of both sexes, who had sallied out to take their customary evening walk. The senhors were completely enveloped in capacious cloaks, with one end thrown gracefully over their left shoulders, and hanging down nearly as low as their waists, while the lovely senhoritas, (among whom we observed several of exquisite symmetry and beauty,) in their delicate mantillas and gay shawls, seemed perfectly irresistible as they moved trippingly on with the ease and tranquillity of snowy swans! Arriving at an hotel in the city, we halted half-an-hour in order to *dine—to dine!* not in the aristocratic and epicurean meaning of the term, but in the signification of a starved traveller, who would eat with a relish a pair of old boots if he could not get anything better.

Burgos is a notable city, both in its present dilapidated aspect, as well as in regard to its history and interesting associations. Nearly a thousand years have elapsed since its foundation, yet it still retains in its old age many traces of its early prime. It is an excellent specimen of a venerable, Gothic Castilian city, and offers to the antiquary and artist many objects worthy of deep and studious attention. The cathedral is one of the grandest in the world. Within a few miles of the city is the tomb of the illustrious Cid, the ancient and renowned hero of Castile. He was born in the year 1026, and died at Valencia in 1099. The present tomb was erected in 1272, by Alonzo de Sabio.

Resuming our places in the diligence, we rolled rapidly out of Burgos. Another night was before us, and as the

Digitized by Google

weather was rather damp and rainy, the romance of the previous night was in a considerable measure abated. So, muffling ourselves in our cloaks, we calmly composed ourselves to sleep. Thank Heaven for the sweet oblivion which soon fell upon our senses, and for the happy dreams of other stars, and other eyes, which beamed upon us in our slumbers!

We found ourselves at sunrise in the midst of a desolate plain, unrelieved by either house, or tree, or human object. During the entire day, the country continued to wear this tame and uninteresting appearance. No signs of verdure manifested themselves on any side. At one time we crossed a rocky district, covered with rocks and stones of tremendous size. Tall mountains frowned upon us in awful majesty and gloom; it seemed as if we were traversing one of the barren wastes of Africa, where the constant and glaring heat of the sun had entirely exhausted the soil. My mind was never more deeply affected with emotions of sublimity, neither upon the tempestuous ocean, nor amid the Alpine heights of Switzerland. The total absence of both animal and vegetable life, forced upon me a feeling of loneliness, such as I had never experienced before. It seemed as if I were wandering in solitude through an enchanted land.

At length the termination of our pilgrimage arrived. On the evening of the 20th of October, while one horn of the [illegible]cent moon had just dropped behind the tips of the adja[illegible] mountains, and the stars above were shining in calm magnificence upon this mystic land of love and crime, the

Digitized by Google

clustering domes and spires of Spain's proud capital broke like a dream of childhood upon our senses. Swiftly we moved on through a beautiful avenue of trees, and passing without ceremony through a massive and finely sculptured gate, were translated, as if by some magic influence, from the heart of a desert, into the midst of the aristocratic and splendid city of Madrid.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

IMPRESSIONS OF MADRID—THE ROYAL PALACE—THE "PRADO" AND "MUSEO."

My first impressions of Madrid were quite as agreeable as I had anticipated. The massiveness and height of the private dwellings, the innumerable jutting balconies, the various lively colours of the houses, the crowded and well-paved streets, the numerous soldiers on guard, the numbers of black-gowned priests, with hats of prodigious size, walking leisurely to and fro, and of dark-eyed senhoritas, in light mantillas, rapidly darting from place to place, forced upon my mind the startling conviction that I was actually within the walls of the luxurious metropolis of Spain.

Intending to spend several months in the city, my first object was to procure suitable and comfortable quarters for a winter residence. This is no easy matter in Madrid, where the buildings generally are constructed more with a view to coolness through the summer, than of comfort during the

Digitized by Google

winter months. Stoves are an unknown luxury, while fireplaces are of such recent introduction, that it is exceedingly difficult to secure quarters supplied with this latter convenience. In this respect, however, we were singularly favoured by fortune, having succeeded, in the course of a few days, in finding apartments exactly in accordance with our desires. We lost no time in getting into them, and were soon as much at home as any two youthful bachelors could reasonably expect to be, under circumstances so isolated and so peculiar.

Being now comfortably settled, we sallied out one bright afternoon to take a walk of exploration through the city. After winding through a labyrinth of narrow streets, we finally arrived at the Palace of the Queen. This edifice is built of a species of stone of snowy whiteness, which gives it a remarkably chaste and beautiful appearance. Neither in external nor internal magnificence is this palace surpassed by any in Europe, and I have doubts whether any other in the world can equal it. Its erection was commenced in 1736, but two additional wings, which were afterwards undertaken, are not even yet completed. Its form is quadrangular, while each of its sides is above four hundred feet in length. In the centre is a *patio* or court-yard, a style prevalent in many parts of Spain, and undoubtedly derived from the Moors: a noble balustrade surrounds the roof, which is flat, and covered with lead. The principal gate is surmounted by a gallery, upheld by four handsome columns

Digitized by Google

of marble; the effect is decidedly harmonious and pleasing The situation of the palace is elevated, and commands an extensive view over the surrounding country, the monotony of which is only relieved by the glittering stream of the Manzanares, the shaded *Alameda* upon its banks, and the majestic range of the Guadarramain in the distance. During a portion of my stay in Madrid, the summits of these mountains were mantled with snow, and often have I strolled out alone towards evening to watch from the palace heights the play of the declining sunbeams upon their silvery peaks. This constituted one of the most impressively beautiful scenes that I witnessed in Spain.

Having walked about the Palace until our curiosity was fully gratified, we turned our steps in an opposite direction —towards that famous promenade of Madrid, the Prado. When we reached this favourite haunt, it was already in the full tide of its unrivalled splendour and brilliancy. The first glance completely enchanted us. Entering by the Calle de Alcala (the most magnificent street I have ever beheld) the Puerta de Alcala stood directly in front of us. This is the most splendid and elaborately carved gate of the city, and cannot fail to excite the admiration of every one who beholds it. Standing near the beautiful Fountain of Cybele, our eyes instantly glanced throughout the entire extent of that most frequented portion of the Prado, which has been styled with much appropriateness *el Salon.*

The weather was deliciously mild, and the sky above us

Digitized by Google

undimmed by a single fleecy cloud. The spectacle was one altogether dazzling: rank, fashion, and beauty glittered in all their rich pageantry; hundreds of superb carriages with fine horses, and footmen in gay livery, were slowly moving up and down the side avenues, which were pleasantly shaded with the drooping branches of ornamental trees. Numerous fountains were sprouting their delicate spray high in the air; mounted officers were dashing by, and thousands of well-dressed *caballeros*, with gloves and canes, were walking and talking together, while as many lovely *senhoritas*, with their airy mantillas and flashing fans, gliding gracefully over the ground, more with the ease and lightness of angelic than human beings, not only completed the picture, but gave to it in truth more than half its witchery and charm. What magnificent creatures are these daughters of sunny Spain—perfect children of nature and of love! Their countenances are, under most circumstances, faithful chroniclers of the various thoughts which agitate their hearts. Unaccustomed to the concealment of her feelings during the magic years of youth,

"The Spanish maid is no coquette,
Nor joys to see a lover tremble;
And if she love, or if she hate,
Alike, she knows not to dissemble.
Her heart can ne'er be bought nor sold,
Howe'er it beats, it beats sincerely;
And though it will not bend to gold,
'T will love you long, and love you dearly."

Digitized by Google

The Saloon of the Prado is nearly fifteen hundred feet in length by about two hundred in width, and is devoted entirely to the use of promenaders. On either side are shady roads for equestrians and carriages, guarded from encroachments by railings of iron. The "Saloon," however, be it remembered, is but a limited portion of the Prado, which in its entire extent, from the Convent of Alvela to the Portillo de Recolatos, is somewhat more than a mile and a half in length. The fountains which decorate this grand and sumptuous promenade are eight in number, and, both in their sculpture and design, merit high praise. They are composed of fine marble, and were erected during the reign of Carlos III, to whom the honour is due of having converted an open and useless spot, noted in the history of robberies and midnight assassinations, into the most delicious and beautiful thoroughfare in Europe.

The fountain of Neptune, situated at the northern extremity of the Saloon, generally elicits the largest share of admiration. It embodies the very soul of motion and animation, and represents the God of the Sea standing in his chariot with his trident in one hand and the reins of his fiery steeds in the other, which appear to be rushing with furious speed over the foaming billows of his watery domain. The capacious pool which surrounds the fountain teems with living fish, which swim about as merrily as if wholly unconscious of a world beyond the narrow limits of their own little lake. Of the many noble buildings which embellish the

Digitized by Google

Prado, that called the Museo, containing the national Gallery of Painting, is without doubt the most striking. This is an immense edifice, with a massive portico of granite, imposing in its general effect, though possessing but slight claims to real architectural merit. Its collection of paintings, however, is extraordinary and unique. Their aggregate number cannot be less than two thousand, while most of them are in an excellent state of preservation, and are the productions of the greatest masters of the art in the world. Among these are nearly a hundred which were removed from the Escurial during the revolutionary troubles of 1837. Velasquez, the great hero and champion of Spanish art, is to be seen only in Madrid, in all his wonderful originality and splendour. His works alone, in the Museo, are above sixty in number, and would well repay an enthusiastic artist for a weary pilgrimage to their hallowed shrine. Next come the works of that poet of colour and dreamer of celestial design, the gifted Murillo, before whose lofty genius the rivals of his day bowed their heads. This magical painter has pourtrayed upon the canvas the most subtle and tender feelings of our nature; and no one can look upon his paintings without experiencing a sentiment of mingled wonder and delight.

Of the Italian school there are ten exquisite productions of Raphael, around which hovers a radiance of unearthly loveliness and purity, such as he alone was able to create. There is a sublimity of conception, and a marvellous skill of execution manifest in the works of this gigantic artist, which

Digitized by Google

seem almost to border upon the supernatural. What can be more divinely sweet than his beautiful countenance of the Virgin, or anything more life-like and innocent than the expressive face of the lovely infant! What surpassing richness and depth of colour, and what astonishing delicacy and power of shade! The spirit of piety broods over the surface of the canvas, and the voice of religion seems to speak from the mute lips of painted thought! The enchanting masterpiece styled "La Perla" is decidedly the most remarkable work in the Gallery. This, which is a representation of the Sacred Family, is one of the most exquisite gems to which art ever gave birth. It formerly belonged to England, but was bought by Philip IV., during the time of Cromwell, for the trifling sum of two thousand pounds, and by his orders immediately transferred to Madrid. It is much to be lamented that England should ever have allowed it to pass out of its hands. Art will strive long before it can again produce an object so perfectly sweet and beautiful as the heavenly countenance of the Virgin.

The Museo is open to the public on Sundays, and to strangers on any day of the week, on the exhibition of their passport, which, as a general rule, should always be carried about the person. As for myself, I always preferred visiting the Museo on public days, on account of the excellent opportunity thus offered of observing the taste, grace, and beauty of the fairer portion of the Madrilenians. It may with truth be said that in no country in the world does the material

Digitized by Google

woman attain so rare a degree of perfection as in Spain. Such ravishing forms, such graces of manner and poetry of expression! Their raven tresses are usually of remarkable length, and elaborately braided with consummate taste and care, while their dark and lustrous eyes, radiant with deep thought and tender feeling, are ever beaming in tranquil beauty, like the silent orbs of heaven upon some summer's eve. The *windows of the soul*—you glean from them the secret revelation of the heart; with their tell-tale glances they unfold to you more than the most eloquent words could express. If love dwell within their bosom, it scintillates its electric light from the eye—it quivers upon the rosy lip, and mantles with blushing joy the velvet cheek. Concealment is impossible—you read the tale in every sidelong glance—you behold it in every sunny smile!

Leaving the Museo, we strolled through the pleasant gardens of the Buen Retiro, adjoining the Prado. These grounds are tastefully laid out, and are ornamented with numerous fountains and pieces of statuary. At the upper part is a large reservoir of pure water, for the supply of the jets in the garden below. Along this runs, on the western side, a wide walk, which is much frequented by the populace on pleasant afternoons. On the opposite side of the pool are the reserved gardens of the royal family; into which, however, any gentleman can readily obtain admission by application to their superintendent. The most curious object in the Buen Retiro is a little Chinese pagoda, rising from the

Digitized by Google

water to the height of fifty or sixty feet, and adding not a little to the varied beauty of these charming grounds.

Returning home, we visited several churches in our way. Some of them were splendidly decorated with gilding and marble; but in comparison with the grand cathedrals which are to be seen in other Spanish cities, they are as nothing. The magnificent ecclesiastical edifices of Spain are the work of former times—none have recently been erected. Those which now exist are hoary with the mists of centuries, and stand like vast tombstones amid the crumbling ruins of fallen cities, which, once powerful and prosperous, worshipped at their shrines.

From the cupola of the Church of Santa Cruz a fine view of the metropolis is afforded, but it is not equal in effect to that presented from the heights of the Buen Retiro gardens at sunset. From thence the city, with its numerous domes and clustering spires, gilded by the oblique rays of the setting sun, and backed by the gold-tipped mountains lifting up their lofty heads in the distance, is one of the most gorgeous scenes upon which, perhaps, eyes ever fell. Let no one judge of Madrid until he has gazed upon it from this spot, and at the twilight hour!

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

OUR SPANISH TEACHER—A DANCING INTRIGUE—DESCRIPTION OF A BULL FIGHT.

THE more we saw of Madrid, the more our attachment for that peculiar city increased. Not a day slipped by that did not add something to the stock of information we had already accumulated, or open to our minds new avenues of entertainment. We lost no time in securing the services of an excellent teacher of the language, under whose instruction, and by dint of incessant application, we made rapid progress. Our teacher was a native of Madrid, and though considerably advanced in years, had scarcely ever been beyond the limits of the capital. He was, however, naturally shrewd, and possessed of a remarkable degree of information and intelligence, for one who had seen so little of the world. It was his custom every day (as he spoke the English language with tolerable fluency) to descant to us at

Digitized by Google

length upon the hidden wonders of the metropolis, as well as the characteristic manners and customs of the people, with every shade of which he seemed to be perfectly familiar. Though as stern and solemn in his personal appearance as any man I have ever encountered, yet on certain occasions he would burst from the bonds of restraint, and surprise us with his flashes of merriment and wit. He was an eccentric mortal, and, like many others in his vocation in Spain, proud, indolent, and poor. With all his faults, he had numerous good qualities, and above all, he possessed a remarkably kind heart. We became exceedingly fond of him, and did him several small favours, for which he never let pass an opportunity of testifying his gratitude. If anything striking or interesting occurred, he was certain to give us an early account of it. If an amusing play was to be acted at one of the theatres, he was sure to let us know; and in return we generally invited him to accompany us, not only as a companion, but as an interpreter.

We considered ourselves extremely fortunate in having met with so interesting and useful a character, who was, besides, so efficient and accomplished a teacher. He was, moreover, a skilful player of the guitar, and had a voice of remarkable richness and power, with which he not unfrequently entertained us. When serious and sentimental, he was likewise musical; when in a mirthful mood he was wonderfully loquacious; but in either case exceedingly interesting and amusing. He often sang for us portions of the national songs

Digitized by Google

of his country, the simplicity and sweetness of which never failed to fill us with delight.

How unpretending, yet how eloquent, are the popular songs of Spain! Soft, harmonious, and tender, the gentle tones sink deep into the heart, and there linger in silence long after the magic sounds have died away upon the listening ear. Irresistibly they address themselves to the soul, in the persuasive accents of entrancing melody—speaking of love which is lasting and true—of bravery which defies despair—of the natural pride and nobility of man—the attachment to country and home—and the immortal hope which exists within the human breast, and rejoices the spirit with its bright visions of everlasting life.

Having been advised to make ourselves acquainted with the peculiar dances of the metropolis, so indispensable an accomplishment to one who wishes to study the society of Madrid, we secured the services of a competent professor of the art; and soon formed a class, numbering with the friends who joined us, *eight* stalwart specimens of the rougher sex. One consideration nearly disgusted some of us with the project we had so suddenly undertaken;—What was to be done for ladies? The idea of attempting to dance with male partners seemed anything but agreeable—an intensely dull and stupid proceeding! We determined, therefore, after mature and deliberate consideration, to make a bold effort to procure, if possible, a supply of youthful damsels, to assist us in carrying forward our contemplated enterprise.

Digitized by Google

Things can be done in Spain with propriety, that would be supremely ridiculous if attempted in any other land. Stimulated with this idea, and bearing in mind the love of adventure which characterizes the Spaniards, we applied without hesitation to our excellent Professor, to relieve us from the unfortunate dilemma in which we were placed. He listened to us with patience, but totally denied the possibility of his being able to afford us any relief. Not so, however, with our worthy young "fiddler," to whom we likewise made known the secret cause of our distress. He immediately eased our anxiety, by stating that he would endeavour to arrange matters to our entire satisfaction. What a glorious prospect—what a charming vista opened before us! Our musician had a young and beautiful sister, to whom he straightway unfolded the character of our communication, at the same time asking her advice on the subject. As amiable and good-natured as himself, she instantly expressed her willingness to exert her influence among her own personal companions and friends, and thus prevent the calamity with which we were threatened, and of which we had so seriously complained. The success of her endeavours was strikingly manifest on the following evening, when she presented herself at the ball-room with as enchanting a body of Spanish girls as the eyes of man ever rested upon. The damsels, though of course not belonging to the aristocracy of the capital, were quite as respectable as could be selected from any grade of the metropolis; and were accompanied by their

Digitized by Google

parents and guardians, who kept a watchful eye upon their movements, and seemed pleased with the attentions we bestowed upon their youthful wards. They were aware that we were foreigners, with only a slight knowledge of the language, or otherwise this pleasant intrigue of ours could never have been accomplished.

We now progressed rapidly in the dancing art, and soon became masters of all the chief dances of the country. Not only did we improve in the use of our feet, but we gained much in the expressive Spanish language, by continual converse with the partners who had honoured us with their company. Not a few of their lessons, I fear, went directly to our hearts, for who can listen to the eloquent words of beauty and not be moved? or gaze upon the eyes of innocence, and not be affected with feelings having some near or remote analogy to both admiration and love? But we will not confess (not even to the kind reader, in whom we have such implicit confidence) all the incidents that befell us in the romantic land of Spain. We aim merely at pleasing his fancy, exciting his curiosity and instructing his understanding in regard to the real condition of a country in which it is presumed he has not himself travelled, and concerning the true state of which his mind is but vaguely and inadequately informed.

One day Don Philippe insisted upon taking us to witness a bull-fight, which was about to take place, and which, it was reported, the Queen herself was expected to attend.

Digitized by Google

This was a spectacle we had never yet beheld, and our curiosity was therefore aroused to the highest possible pitch of excitement. Visions of blood floated before our fancy, and flashing steel gleamed across our sight. Anxiety stood on tip-toe, and the moments flew slowly by, until the wished for hour arrived. We left the business of securing seats in the arena to Philippe, who by early application succeeded in obtaining for us as eligible positions for witnessing the spectacle as we could reasonably desire. The critical moment was now at hand, our hearts almost leaped from our mouths, so deeply were we excited in contemplation of the sanguinary event. At length the trumpets sounded, and forthwith entered, in martial array, the entire body of combatants, gaily dressed, and presenting together a most striking and brilliant effect. Marching to the opposite side of the ring, they respectfully bowed to the appointed authorities, and then took their places, in complete readiness for action. At a given signal, a small iron gate was suddenly opened, and in an instant a furious bull bounded frantically into the arena; and then as if petrified with astonishment at the wonderful scene around him, he stood motionless for a few seconds, staring wildly at the immense assembly, and pawing vehemently the ground beneath his feet. It was a solemn and critical moment, and I can truly say that I never before experienced such an intense degree of curiosity and interest. My feelings were wound up to the highest pitch of excitement, and I can scarcely be

Digitized by Google

lieve that even that terrible human tragedy, a bloody gladiatorial scene, could have affected me more deeply. The compressed fury of the bull lasted but an instant: suddenly his glaring eye caught the sight of a red flag, which one of the *chulos*, or foot combatants, had waved before him, and immediately he rushed after his nimble adversary, who evaded his pursuit by jumping skilfully over the lower inclosure of the ring. The herculean animal, thus baulked in his rage, next plunged desperately towards one of the *picadores*, or mounted horsemen, who calmly and fearlessly awaited his approach, and then turned off his attack by the masterly management of his long and steel-capped pike. Thwarted once more in his purpose, he became still more frantic than before, while his low and suppressed roar, expressive of the concentrated passion and rage which burned within him, sounded like distant thunder to my ears. Half closing his eyes, and lowering his formidable horns, he darted again at one of the picadores, and with such tremendous power, that he completely unhorsed him. Then shouts of applause from the spectators filled the arena: "Bravo toro!" "Viva toro!" and other exclamations of encouragement for the bull broke from every mouth. The picador lost no time in springing to his feet and re-mounting his horse, which, however, could scarcely stand, so weak was the poor creature from the stream of blood issuing from the deep wound in his breast. As soon as the enraged bull, whose attention had been purposely withdrawn by the chulos, beheld his

Digitized by Google

former adversary now crimsoned with gore, he rushed at him with the most terrific fury, and, thrusting his horns savagely into the lower part of the tottering animal, he almost raised him from his feet, and so lacerated and tore open his abdomen, that his bowels gushed out upon the ground. Unable any longer to sustain himself, the pitiable animal fell down in the awful agonies of death, and in a few moments expired. Two other horses shortly shared the same miserable fate, and their mangled bodies were lying, covered with blood, in the centre of the arena. The bull himself was now becoming perceptibly exhausted, and his one end was drawing nigh. For the purpose of stimulating and rousing into momentary action his rapidly-waning strength, the assailants on foot attacked him with barbed darts, called *banderillos*, which they thrust with skill into each side of his brawny neck. Sometimes these little javelins are charged with a prepared powder, which explodes the instant that the sharp steel sinks into the flesh. The torture thus produced, drives the wretched animal to the extreme of madness, who bellows and bounds in his agony, as if endued with the energy of a new life.

On the present occasion, the arrows used were not of an explosive character, yet they served scarcely less effectually to enrage the furious monster. But hark! the last trumpet is sounding the awful death-knell of the warrior-beast. The ring becomes instantly cleared, and the foaming animal stands motionless and alone, sole monarch of the arena. But the

Digitized by Google

fiat has gone forth, and the doom of death is impending over him. The *matador* enters the ring by a secret door, and after bowing to the president, and throwing down his cap in token of respect, slowly and deliberately approaches his terrific adversary, who stands as if enchained to the spot by a consciousness of the fearful destiny that awaits him. The matador, undismayed by the ferocious aspect of the bull, cautiously advances, with his eyes fixed firmly and magnetically upon him; a bright Toledo blade glistens in his right hand, while in his left he carries the *muleta*, or crimson flag, with which to exasperate the declining spirit of his foe. An intense stillness reigns throughout the vast assemblage, the most critical point of the tragedy is at hand, and every glance is riveted upon the person and movements of the matador. A single fatal thrust may launch him into eternity, yet no expression of fear escapes him; cool, and self-possessed, he stands before his victim, studious of every motion, and ready to take advantage of any chance.

It is this wonderful display of skill and bravery that fascinates the attention of a Spanish audience, and not the shedding of blood or the sufferings of the animal, which are as much lost sight of in the excitement of the moment as the gasping of a fish or quivering of a worm upon the hook is disregarded by the humane disciple of Isaac Walton. The bull and matador, as motionless as if carved in marble, present a fearfully artistic effect. At length, like an electric flash, the polished steel of the matador flies in the air, and descends

Digitized by Google

with tremendous force into the neck of the doomed animal, burying itself in the flesh even up to the hilt. The blow is well made, and from the mouth of the bull a torrent of blood gushes forth in a crimson stream; he staggers, drops on his knees, recovers himself for an instant, and then falls dead at the feet of his conqueror, amid the tumultuous plaudits of the excited throng of spectators.

Such is a slight sketch of a Spanish bull-fight. The impression made upon our minds by the first representation was so deeply tinctured with horror that we resolved never to attend another, though it is but fair to state that this good resolution, like many others we have made in our lives, was eventually overcome by subsequent temptations.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

SOCIETY IN MADRID, AND CAUSES OF ITS CORRUPTION, WITH SOME REMARKS ON MARRIAGE AND FEMALE INFIDELITY.

I HAVE often thought that if some competent person would write an adequate description of the various *mysteries* of Madrid, it might form one of the most interesting works in the world. An extended residence, however, and an unlimited field of observation in the collection of materials, would be absolutely required by him who should undertake this exceedingly difficult task. The metropolis is a little world in itself, and abounds in infinite sources of amusement and instruction, the well-written detail of which would be certain to afford a high degree of entertainment to the reading community. Society in Madrid exhibits itself under a variety of phases, but everywhere the same spirit of romance, poetry, and mystery, seems to prevail. Emblems of secrecy and suspicion meet the stranger at each step, and spectres

Digitized by Google

of monastic gloom startle him at every corner. Wherever he goes he is sure to encounter something surprising and strange—something different from all his previous experience, and from everything he had expected to meet with even in Spain. The foundations of society he finds are already undermined and hollow, while the tottering superstructure, which vice and corruption have reared thereon, threaten an early and terrible downfall to an ancient structure, around the very ruins of which will hover, like birds of evil omen, the ghost of departed grandeur and the spirit of sepulchral gloom!

There is much to admire in the Spanish race, though it cannot be denied that there exists, likewise, in their character, not a little to criticise and condemn. Naturally indolent, through the influence of a voluptuous climate, they have been readily reduced to their present unfortunate state of lethargy and sloth, by the paralyzing tendency of a falsely-constructed and badly-managed Government acting upon a popular mind constitutionally disposed to inaction and repose, and lacking the stern energy and force which demand at the cannon's mouth the restoration of privileges withdrawn, and the establishment of rights which selfishness and avarice have hitherto denied them. They have been bound down, likewise, by the heavy yoke of ecclesiastical intolerance and superstition, and need the calm and invincible determination of moral force to shake off the grisly monster, which has fastened, like the blood-sucking vampire, upon

Digitized by Google

their very vitals. They writhe and groan under the tyrannical sway of an impious and sacrilegious priestcraft, without making the slightest effort to remove the obvious cause, which in the present renders them miserable, and from the future saps the vitality and spirit of hope.

Rise up, men, and purify your stagnant and lifeless religious system,—or despair! Poverty and misery will most assuredly mock all your vain attempts at future advancement. Establish common schools throughout your wide and magnificent land, and mark the beneficial results that will speedily ensue. Ignorance, followed by her long and gloomy train, headed by crime, superstition, and wretchedness, will instantly vanish before the dazzling light of truth, and hide herself in the dark caves of error and sin. A better state of things will immediately arise, and universal prosperity and happiness crown every effort with success. What Spain has been, she may again become, if she will courageously and nobly break from the bonds of an unrighteous tyranny, and turn from the fatal pathway which seems to be leading her on with noiseless but certain steps to the appalling brink of national ruin. My prayers and heart-felt wishes are for the welfare of Spain and the preservation of the Spanish people. I love the country and the race. Nature has profusely lavished her bounties upon each; but the former is cursed with the blight of sloth, and the latter menaced with that degradation which is the sure termination of the avenues of ignorance and superstition.

Digitized by Google

I trace much of the evil now existing in the society of Spain to the corruption of the marriage state, and to the loose ideas disseminated among the women generally in regard to female chastity and honour. Modesty is peculiarly a characteristic of the Spanish maid; but viewing things through the false medium of a distorted society, she is only feebly conscious of that sense of shame and insult, which a female in our country would naturally experience when the trial of her virtue was in question.

Young females in Spain are kept in a state of seclusion highly unfavourable to moral purity and virtue. This is owing entirely to parental restraint, which seeks in this manner to maintain sovereign control over the inclinations of their daughters, and to preserve to itself the exclusive disposal of their hands—if not of their hearts. Educated at home, and under the charge of an old *duenna*, to whom her honour as well as her instruction is entrusted, and who watches over her with the vigilance of an Argus on all occasions when exposed to temptation and the public gaze, she looks forward to marriage, not as the terrestrial heaven of love and social delights, but merely as an avenue of escape into the world, from the irksome imprisonment of her maiden life. She will accordingly marry any one whom her parents please to accept, reserving to herself the natural right of disposing of her affections according to the dictates of her heart. You cannot dam up the impulsive feelings of a Spanish maid with the mockery of a legal marriage. A glorious being by nature,

Digitized by Google

she is the victim of a corrupt system of society, and scorns with justice the shadowy barriers of an institution which God does not sanction, and which nature abhors. Where no union of heart and soul exists, there is no legitimate marriage in the eyes of Heaven. The act is a base counterfeit of the sacred union which our Maker enjoins, and a disgraceful prostitution of the nobler and better impulses of humanity. Marriage is a sublime and beautiful compact, and cannot exist between two whose thoughts and feelings do not harmonize and blend. It is a serious crime on the part of parents, to stifle or check the affections of their daughters, or to throw any obstacles in the way of their union to the man of their choice. Far better is it that you should make the sacrifice of your own peculiar wishes, than that your children should live to curse you for the misery and wretchedness of their lives.

Any one who has visited Spain requires no written arguments to convince him of the evil effects which necessarily arise from the influence of parental tyranny. Daughters are married entirely with a view to wealth and position, and without the slightest regard to the natural instincts of affection. The unavoidable consequence of this state of things is palpably manifested in the striking infidelity which exists so universally among Spanish wives. Diligently secluded from the society of lovers before marriage, they are completely surrounded by them afterwards. The restraints of custom are removed; and she who lately stood in such dread of

Digitized by Google

parental scrutiny, now acts in perfect defiance of the wishes and commands of her husband.

The Spanish girl is a creature of indomitable courage and energy, and is only to be managed by the silken reins of love. She will fearlessly face the grim spectre of death, in defence of the one upon whom she has bestowed her heart, while she will totally disregard the admonitions of a so-called *husband*, whom she does not esteem. The latter is her husband in the consideration of men, while the former is her husband in the eyes of nature and of God! Join her to the man of her choice, and she will be as true to him as the steel to the magnet—as the earth to its orbit—or as virtue to truth! She will live with him—suffer with him—and, if necessary, die for him! She will be his delight and cheerful companion in prosperity, his faithful nurse in sickness, and his unflinching and constant friend in adversity.

Such being the true nature of the Spanish woman, how much more pitiable is it that she should be victimized and corrupted by the evil tendency of a falsely constructed society. Chaste by nature, she is rendered unchaste through the imperfection of human institutions; faithful and true, she is made the slave of her own passions, and the violator of the virtues of her sex. Majestic and noble-minded, she has fallen in degradation at the shrine of avarice and vice; robbed of her spirituality, she has sunk in the quicksands of voluptuousness and crime. In vain she holds up her arms for aid and protection,—Heaven itself seems to have aban-

Digitized by Google

doned her, while the Government is too corrupt and indolent to afford her any assistance.

I have been led to make these remarks, not with any intention of excusing the corruptions of the Spanish people, but merely to indicate the true fountains from which they spring. I have endeavoured to show what I myself firmly believe, that real virtue may and does exist in Spain, and that the unchastity so especially characteristic of married life in that country ought not to be attributed to any natural defect of character, but rather to the direct influence of social disease.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

AN EXCURSION TO THE MONASTERY OF THE ESCURIAL.

Being desirous to visit the celebrated monastery of the Escurial, I resolved to do so without delay. This wonderful institution was erected during the reign of Philip II. as a votive offering to St. Lorenzo, in honour of a certain battle won by the Spaniards against the French, on the anniversary of that saint. Its distance from the metropolis is not above thirty miles, while its elevation is about seven hundred feet greater. Grand, solemn, and sublime, it rears its mighty form amid the stern solitude of the Guadarrama mountains, as splendid and impressive a monument of art as the genius and skill of man ever raised.

Taking our seats in the diligence, we moved at a rapid and exhilarating pace out of the city. Although it was now near the close of November, the sky was cloudless, and the rays of the sun warm and vivifying. I took with me a man

Digitized by Google

who, though a Frenchman by birth, had the reputation of being one of the most intelligent and accomplished *cicerones* in Spain. He had travelled in every part of the kingdom, had experienced frequent adventures with banditti, spoke several languages, overflowed with gossip, and was, in a word, the very man I should have selected from a thousand, as the companion and guide of my present excursion.

Entering upon the Florida, a pleasant promenade just without the walls of the city, we rode for a few miles along the shady banks of the Manzanares, which we finally crossed by a stone bridge, of preposterous dimensions for so small a stream, and fantastically decorated with a file of chalky statues on either side. The Spaniards have a humorous saying, that the bridge should be sold to purchase water, so insignificant is the river which it spans.

Having crossed the stream, a dreary and undulating plain stretched before us, bounded only by the lofty mountains which towered up like spectres in the distance. No object, save an occasional man, woman, or donkey, presented itself to our notice. There was nothing upon which we could fix our eyes but the azure sky, the gigantic hills, and the steepled city from which we were gradually receding. Indeed, I should have been quite at a loss how to wile away the hours, had it not been for my companion, who very agreeably entertained me with the recital of some of the strange scenes through which he had passed, and startling adventures that he had experienced. The road

Digitized by Google

over which we were passing was hard and smooth, occasionally flanked, in dangerous places, by a protecting wall of stone. When we had completed the first half of our journey, the huge monastery became distinctly visible, and appeared vast and imposing, even amidst the tremendous mountains which cast their shadows around it. The sun was now sinking in the west, and the firmament was glowing with the gorgeous reflection of his declining beams. I never beheld a spectacle more magnificent! Everything was calculated to affect the mind with sentiments of awe and solemnity. The intense stillness itself was fearful, while the aspect of the country on every side was naked and lonely. The mountains were bare and tréeless, and the grey, shadowy form of the stern old monastery, enthroned amid their heights, seemed like the earthly palace of Superstition, surrounded by the eternal rocks and hills of Spain.

Passing, at length, through a huge iron gateway, we entered the royal grounds belonging to the monastery, which, though uncultivated, were covered with a thicket of stunted trees and straggling bushes. Upon a small rock, on the left side of the entrance, was a stone cross, serving to indicate the ancient dominion of the cowl. Continuing our course through an avenue of sickly poplars and elms, we soon caught sight of the famous Escurial, which, from its plantations, and gardens, and terraces, rose in the twilight like an enchanted thing of other days. The hamlet of the Escurial is of considerable size, and contains several large stone houses for the

Digitized by Google

ministry, besides a number of substantial dwellings belonging to private individuals, who, however, only tenant them when the Court happens to be resident at this place, during the excessive heat of the midsummer months.

My companion escorted me immediately to a humble inn, where we succeeded in securing tolerable quarters for the night. Here I supped alone in a large and desolate chamber, with no company but the pretty Spanish maid who so attentively and quietly waited upon me.

Before retiring, I walked out with my companion to make an inspection of the monastery by moonlight. The mists of evening which enveloped it, gave additional sombreness to the ponderous structure, while the deep quiet of slumbering nature, and the myriads of bright stars, lent the charms of mystery and solemnity to the wild and impressive scene. I lingered about the venerable pile for more than an hour, reluctant to tear myself away; but exhausted nature finally triumphed, and I returned slowly to the hotel.

I was awakened by my companion before dawn, and away we clambered up the mountain together, like a couple of romantic madcaps, with no other object in view, than that of beholding from an elevated position, the splendid picture of a sunrise in Spain. Below us lay the grim monastery, while, beyond it, stretched the desolate and blighted table-land, as far as the eye could penetrate.

No murmur of animated nature broke upon our ears. The elements were hushed, and the natives of the hamlet wrapt

Digitized by Google

in sleep. A faint rosy tinge was beginning to spread along the edge of the horizon, growing gradually deeper and deeper in tint, until it had the appearance of a furnace glow. The heavens seemed to be on fire, and the feathery clouds to be garnished with every celestial dye. One by one the twinkling stars faded imperceptibly away, as if consumed with fervent heat. At length, like a floating world of molten gold, the glorious orb of day rose in majesty and beauty above the desert plain. The spires of the Escurial glittered in the brilliant sunbeams, and the mountain summits became radiant with light. The landscape appeared to smile, and as my eye glanced from earth to heaven—from the proud monastery to the rolling sun, thoughts too subtle for expression darted like meteors through my soul amid the mighty and unchanging hills of Spain.

During the morning we visited the grand chapel of the monastery. Its stern architecture is such as strongly to impress with solemnity every one who enters it. The chapel presents the form of the Grecian cross, and in its decorations is remarkable for both simplicity and elegance. It is surmounted by a noble dome, exceedingly symmetrical in its proportions, and supported by four square columns of enormous size, composed of massive blocks of granite. Its general style of architecture is the Doric, this being most in accordance with the severity and religious simplicity of a monastery. The grand altar, which is magnificent, is fronted by a flight of steps of beautiful red-veined marble. On either

Digitized by Google

side, in niches constructed in the wall, are the royal families of Charles V. and Philip II., represented in figures of bronze. They are in kneeling postures, with their faces turned towards the altar.

Leaving the chapel, we next visited the *biblioteca* or library. This is a noble hall of about two hundred feet in length, thirty in width, and nearly forty in height. The floor is paved with blocks of marble of various colours, tastefully arranged in patterns, while the ceiling is painted in fresco, and elicits much admiration by its freshness of colouring and energy of design. The number of volumes contained in the library is between fifteen and twenty thousand. These are placed in handsome cases of carved wood, with their edges turned outwards. Besides the books, there is a considerable collection of ancient manuscripts, some of the most curious of which are generally shown to visitors; also an excellent portrait of Philip II., as he appeared in his latter years, when, as a diseased hypochondriac and monk, he wandered through the solitary cloisters of this immense edifice, which he had himself founded, the mere phantom of what he once had been!

From the library we passed into a long suite of apartments, which, during the stay of the Court at this place, are exclusively appropriated to the use and accommodation of the royal family. Several of these chambers are furnished with an extraordinary degree of luxury and magnificence. They abound in paintings, many of them of the rarest merit.

Digitized by Google

Among them is pointed out the little room which was occupied by the eccentric monarch, and where, after a protracted and painful illness, he finally rendered up his weak and shattered spirit. Several articles which were used by the unfortunate king during his last days, were exhibited to us by our venerable guide—an old man with silver locks, but without the feeblest ray of sight. He had been born in the vicinity of the monastery, and though he had lost the use of his eyes more than forty years since, yet he guided us as skilfully through all parts of the building, as if he had been possessed of the most perfect vision, and besides described to us every object with accuracy, merely from the early impressions of his youth. Among the relics of the deceased king, which were shown to us, was a plain writing-desk, a common book-stand, and a couple of stools upon which he was accustomed to support his feet, severely afflicted with the gout. The roof of the apartment was flat and without ornament; the walls plain and of singular whiteness, and the floor composed of a rude material resembling brick. So great, indeed, was the self-denial of the founder of the Escurial in these matters, that he afterwards observed to one of his contemporaries, who accidentally alluded to the subject, "I came not to this place to be a monarch, but a monk."

It would be an endless work to give an adequate description of the wonders of the monastery. We have no idea of attempting any such thing; on the contrary, we merely allude to the objects and matters which more particularly

Digitized by Google

struck our attention. Having passed through several rich apartments, ornamented with tapestry and silken hangings of various colours, we entered upon a suite of rooms, infinitely surpassing in beauty all we had seen before. These were inlaid and enamelled in the most elaborate and exquisite manner. Upon their embellishment had been employed a number of highly skilful artists, from the time of Charles IV., until the year 1831, when they were completed. In the first chamber, evidently intended as a kind of office for the king, the floor was beautifully inlaid with different woods, having a grand flower worked in the centre, garnished with vines and garlands of life-like hue. The frieze of the walls was likewise of the same species of workmanship, being adorned with flowers and other pleasing designs, and relieved with mouldings splendidly gilt. Passing through two smaller rooms, hung with orange-coloured silk, we entered the *reclinatorio* or drawing-room, surrounded with beautiful jars, and an infinite variety of choice and curious objects. The chairs and walls were covered with white tissue, with a border of gold and green, worked in the form of a graceful arbour. This lovely apartment was, moreover, furnished with an exquisite crucifix of ivory, and four fine paintings, containing representations of sacred scenes in the history of Christ.

By the light of a dim lantern, we now descended into the "Panteon," or subterranean chamber of departed royalty. This is situated directly beneath the grand altar of the

Digitized by Google

chapel; and is approached by a flight of steps, arched with polished marble. Near the principal gateway, or entrance, are two statues of Italian workmanship. One of these figures represents "Human Nature," breathless and prostrate, with the crown fallen off from her head, and a sickle in her right hand, in the act of reaping the flowers of a cornucopia, while in her left hand she has a sceptre, with this inscription, "*Natura cecidit.*" The other statue personifies Hope, radiant with joy, and smiling as it were in the delicious expectation of coming happiness. In her left hand she holds a torch, yielding bright and perpetual flames, while with her right she holds forth the inscription, "*Exultat Spes.*"

The steps which lead directly to the consecrated vault of the dead, are thirty-four in number, and are divided into several series, by a small intervening space. The first resting-place (if it may so be called) resembles a miniature chapel, sustained by four columns of marble and jaspar, and having a light cupola, from the centre of which hangs a small chandelier, with six candlesticks of bronze; and on each side is a door of inlaid wood, intended, however, merely for ornament. The second "rest" is similar to the first, only that the door on the right leads into the "Sacristy," and that on the left into the "Panteon de los Infantes," or burying-place of the Royal Infants. The entrance to the sovereign chamber is ornamented with four columns, two of jaspar, and two of bronze. Before these is a grated gateway, which gives admission into the *Royal Parlour of Death!* You enter, and

Digitized by Google

are surprised to find yourself in the midst of a splendid though small apartment, silent and lonely, and illumined only by the flickering lantern of the guide. Here pause, and reflect, for a moment, upon the lives of the royal sleepers around you!

The chamber is of an octagonal form, and is thirty-six feet in diameter by thirty-eight in height. It is superbly adorned with the choicest marbles and jasper, carefully polished, and beautifully decorated with mouldings of bronze and gilt. The style of architecture is an artificial or composed one, but is characterized by perfect symmetry and uniformity. The mosaic pavement represents a star, with a large flower in the centre, variegated with inlaid stones of every colour and shade. The ceiling is in the form of a dome, the arches of which are of jasper, and the intermediate spaces of black marble, with bronze mouldings running around in curves and wreaths. The key of the arch is surrounded with a circle of jasper, eighteen feet in circumference. From this is suspended a large chandelier, composed of bronze, and distinguished alike for its extreme beauty and taste. Its lower branches or arms are encircled by four livid serpents; higher up are seen the figures of the four Evangelists; above these are twenty-four cornucopias, separated into three distinct groups, the first of which is supported by the miniature forms of eight winged children, the second by as many angels kneeling upon the bends of the brackets, while the third group is sustained by eight female figures, disposed in

Digitized by Google

a circle, with an eagle behind each of them. The whole work is surmounted by a royal crown, a globe, and a cross; and is enriched and filled up with a multitude of heads, military trophies, mouldings, and other ornaments of a rich and tasteful character. This magnificent chandelier is only illuminated when the interment of a monarch is about to take place.

Each of the octagonal sides of the "Panteon" is eight feet in width, by fifteen and a half in height. Near the entrance is a font of blood-veined jasper, constantly filled with consecrated water. On the opposite side of the chamber is an altar, of chaste design and elegant proportions. Its pedestal and table are both of black marble, with mouldings and foliages of bronze, varied in their colours. In the midst of the "frontal" is a low relief in bronze, representing the entombment of the Saviour. Upon the table are raised two fluted columns of jasper, with the bases and heads of gilded bronze. Upon these rests the architrave, the frieze and cornice of which are of marble, with fillets and trimmings of metal, terminating in an open frontispiece, bearing in the centre the motto "*Resurrectio Nostra.*" In the space between the columns is a symmetrical arch, within which is a splendid tablet of porphyry, serving to support a crucifix of bronze, and also a cross of black marble. This fine piece of work was executed in Rome, and added to the curiosities of the Escurial by that great national painter, Diego Velasquez. In a reserved sepulchre, standing before the altar, is

Digitized by Google

a collection of precious relics, placed here by Alonzo de Guzman, patriarch of the Indies, on the day that the "Panteon" was consecrated by him, the 15th of March, 1654.

The remaining six sides of the octagon are carved and adorned in an uniform manner, and have each of them four shelves of black marble, with mouldings of bronze and a bracket of the same material at each extremity. Above the gate are two more shelves, making in all twenty-six, upon every one of which is placed a marble sarcophagus, or sepulchral urn, containing the remains of some defunct Sovereign. The feet of these urns are in the form of lion's claws, while upon the front of each of them is a gilded plate, upon which is carved in letters of black, the name of the potentate whose ashes repose within. The number of kings now interred in the "Panteon" is nine, among which are the remains of Charles V. and Philip II. These are all arranged upon the right of the altar. Upon the left are the Queens—eight in number. The bodies of those who died without succession, and likewise those of the Princes and Infantas, are deposited in the "Panteon de los Infantes," which is entered from the staircase, as already mentioned. The number there buried is sixty-three.

With minds full of serious thoughts we returned to our humble inn, where we refreshed ourselves with a plain meal, and then sallied out once more to pay a brief visit to the Casa del Campo, a royal cottage of the Escurial. This gem of a palace is one of the most beautiful of the kind in Europe.

Digitized by Google

Although chaste and simple in its external aspect, the furniture and ornaments of the interior are of the most rare and exquisite quality. It has many fine paintings, as well as admirable specimens of statuary. It is built of stone, while some of the halls and staircases consist of pure and highly polished marble from Italy. The gardens which surround it are laid out with taste, and form a pleasing contrast to the naked and dreary country, which seems to stretch out interminably to the east.

In the evening I again ascended the adjacent heights to take a farewell view of the magnificent monastery by moonlight. Long I gazed and ruminated upon the history of the vast and venerable pile, so calm and silent at my feet. What a marvellous monument of human skill! It is at once *a Temple—a Palace*—and *a Tomb!*

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

THE GARDENS AND FOUNTAINS OF LA GRANJA, OR SAN ILDEFONZO.

At an early hour on the following morning, we took leave of the Escurial, and proceeded on horseback towards the royal *sitio* of San Ildefonzo, or La Granja, as the spot is more frequently called. It is distant about eight Spanish leagues, and is reached by means of a noble highway over the mountains. Our guide through the monastery was, as we have stated, perfectly blind; and it struck me as an odd coincidence, that the muleteer who was to conduct us on our present excursion, should be quite lame. Notwithstanding this misfortune, which had been occasioned some years previous by the kick of a refractory horse, he contrived to get over the ground at such a rapid pace, as completely to astonish us, and almost to create a conviction in our minds, that those without eyes in Spain could see better, and those

Digitized by Google

without legs could walk faster, than persons having the full possession of these faculties.

No man knows what he can accomplish until he has served an apprenticeship in the severe school of necessity. It is not reasonable to be supposed, however, that our limping muleteer made as rapid progress on his feet, as we should have desired to do, with the advantage of being on horseback. He nevertheless most provokingly kept up with us every foot of the way. Our incorrigible horses seemed to have a secret understanding with their master, or sympathy for his pecular condition, for although we bastinadoed them well, they obstinately refused to make the slightest change in their snail-like pace. As we proceeded, the scenery became more wild and interesting. The road was admirable, and wound for a time along the side of a majestic mountain, while a deep and picturesque valley lay upon our left. Rocks and pines, mingled in romantic confusion, lent a strange charm to some portions of the journey. Overtaking a party of peasantry mounted upon mules, we joined them and journeyed on together. The animals were each heavily laden with immense and well filled panniers, between which was generally seated, in calm satisfaction and comfort, either a man, a woman, or a child. My companion fell into such a warm disquisition with one of the pretty maids, upon some tender though exciting theme, that I gave up in despair all idea of mending our pace.

Having reached the "Puerto," or gate, as the frontier is

Digitized by Google

called, we immediately descended into the province of "Old Castile." The mountains were now covered with a thick forest of firs and pines. Becoming a little apprehensive of banditti, I asked my companion suddenly, how many times he had been robbed. Judge of my surprise when he replied that this thrilling event had befallen him no less than *twenty-two times* within the last twelve years. However, he added that, as he was not accustomed (from motives of prudence) to carry much money with him, he had never consequently been plundered to any considerable amount; and (probably with the object of removing my alarm) he furthermore stated that, as the roads in Spain, during a few months back, had been better guarded than usual, robberies had been comparatively rare.

As my companion rode on at a short distance in advance of me, his ludicrous appearance put me strongly in mind of that most faithful of squires—Sancho Panza. Before him was his round valise, with a variety of articles sticking out at each end, while behind him were his saddle-bags, one of them hanging at least a foot nearer the ground than the other. He himself sat bolt upright upon the back of his steed, bobbing up and down in a singularly amusing manner, whenever the animal started forward upon a faster, or, to speak more correctly, a less slow pace than usual. Turning the base of a hill, we came at once in view of the cathedral, palace, and town of San Ildefonzo, upon a gentle slope, at the foot of a range of towering mountains, and surrounded

Digitized by Google

by waving groves and gardens of surpassing loveliness. It was a scene eminently worthy of an artist's eye. In front extended for many a mile the grassy and undulating plain, while in the immediate background, the peak of "La Penalara" rose to the height of nearly nine thousand feet, presenting a most impressive feature in the landscape.

On arriving within the walls of the town, our first undertaking was to secure a comfortable meal; and as soon as we had dispatched this, we entered the magical precincts of the gardens. What an extraordinary change! What a delightful illusion! a fairy-land seemed to be blooming around me! Indeed, the beautiful scene appeared almost a realization of the Arabian tales. Urns, statues, flower-beds, and benches of white marble were on every side, while large and splendid fountains, glittering among the trees, produced upon the senses an impression like that of a dream. Such voluptuous elegance I had only read of before—never witnessed. Tempting avenues, bordered with handsome trees, ran in every direction, while marble Naiads, from amid the foliage, appeared to beckon us to come. I could not but reflect how strikingly the present lonely and deserted aspect of the gardens must contrast with their gay festivity during the summer months, when Nature puts on her liveliest costume of flowers, and the pure atmosphere is redolent with perfume and song.

Carelessly we wandered about from place to place, and from fountain to fountain. The moments flitted by like but-

Digitized by Google

terflies, and the soft twilight came upon us unawares. The leaves were rustling upon the ground, agitated by the cool autumnal breeze. The trees looked bare and desolate: verdure had left them, and the happy birds of summer had ceased to sing amid their branches. The spray of the fountains no longer sparkled in the air. The little water which trickled over the cascades gave forth no murmur nor sound. All was still and mournful as the grave. It seemed as if the *heart* of the paradise had stopped—as if its life and soul and melody had fled.

How different does every thing appear during the rosy months of summer in Spain. Then the pride of royalty and beauty is assembled here. The trees are drooping with foliage, and decked with fragrant blossoms. The flowers are in bloom, and the innocent birds eloquent with their sweetest songs. The fountains are alive, and the cascades foaming and dashing their glittering spray. The shady avenues are thronged with the loveliness of one sex and the chivalry of the other. Pleasure seems here to have established her blissful reign—to have found at last an undisturbed retreat —a quiet home. But be not dazzled with the fickle glare: the Spanish heart is like the chameleon in its hues, and often seems the gayest when most sad. Ay! the calm and cordial brow may be knit in fiercest rage ere the set of sun; and the eyes of the fair maiden, so bright with apparent joy while the moon rolls in silence through the heavens, may be clouded with grief and weeping before the break of morn.

Digitized by Google

As the gardens, including even the soil, are entirely artificial, the cost of their construction was immense, amounting to nearly thirty millions of dollars. They were laid out during the reign of Philip V., to whom the idea was suggested by the sylvan enchantments of Versailles. To my taste, however, they very much surpass, both in natural and artistic effect, the proudest claims of the French elysium.

The fountains are twenty-six in number, and represent various interesting mythological subjects. One, called "La Fama," throws its waters to the height of one hundred and thirty feet. The design is that of the winged horse Pegasus, standing in a spirited attitude upon a rock, with the goddess of liberty mounted upon him in an erect and commanding posture, and looking towards the east, as if in the act of beholding the sun. In her right hand she has a trumpet of brass, while with her left she supports the main jet of the fountain. Four figures at the feet of the goddess and the horse, personify those ferocious and malevolent beings who take pleasure in vituperating laudable actions, and are pained by the success and prosperity of the virtuous. In the pool or basin which surrounds this admirable work of art are a number of dolphins, surrounded by Cupids, which cast jets of water from their mouths and nostrils. The material of which they are composed is lead, bronzed over. Near the fountain is a beautiful parterre, bearing the same name. It is handsomely designed, and ornamented with numerous

Digitized by Google

urns and statues of marble. Of the latter, two in the centre of the flowery plot embody the ancient fable of Apollo and Daphne. The nymph is about being changed into a laurel tree in order to escape the furious passion of her ardent lover. The afflicted god afterwards consecrated this lovely tree, and it became henceforth the crown and recompense of poets.

The fountain of the "Bath of Diana," which we next visited, is probably the most unique work of the kind in the gardens. It is arranged as a frontispiece, having a solid wall of granite in the rear, rising to the height of fifty feet. In the midst is seen a little grotto, arched above, and adorned in its concavity with a profusion of marine shells. Here is revealed the form of Actæon, entirely made upon a rock, with his flute applied to his lips. Lower down are three tiers of red-streaked marble, and at proportionate distances from each other are distributed the six nymphs of the goddess Diana, who stands in the midst of them in the act of taking a bath. One of the maids seated upon a lower step, seems to be playing with a dog; another is engaged in washing the feet of the goddess; a third is dressing her luxuriant tresses, while another holds an outstretched mantle in her hands, for the purpose of concealing the naked charms of her mistress from the eyes of the hunter Actæon. The remaining nymphs are scattered in groups, and are either sporting with dolphins or conversing among themselves. At the extremes of the principal font are two baskets

Digitized by Google

filled with the treasures of the sea. Near these are a couple of deer in reclining attitudes, with two children upon the back of each of them, frolicking with one another in all the mirthful innocence of happy childhood. The whole number of jets connected with this remarkable fountain is about thirty, one half of which are vertical, and the remainder inclined. The figures are painted in imitation of white marble, and present an exceedingly fine effect in contrast with the rich green of surrounding nature.

Continuing our walk, the fountain of "Latona and the Frogs" next arrested our attention. Both its design and execution elicited our warmest admiration. The large circular pool contains sixteen frogs, of enormous size and ugly aspect, looking towards the centre, where, upon an elevated rock of white marble, is seen the goddess Latona in a kneeling posture, with her left hand raised, and her countenance directed towards heaven in an attitude of prayer. With her right hand she sustains one of her children, while another, who has fallen on one side, has its delicate arms raised towards its mother, as if imploring her assistance. Every one must remember the fable here so forcibly represented. Latona was banished from heaven through the jealousy of Juno, and condemned to wander upon the earth a martyr to the persecutions of the serpent Python. During her journeyings she encountered once, while fatigued and exhausted, a body of reapers, from whom she asked a cup of water to quench her raging thirst. They not only inhu-

Digitized by Google

manly disregarded her humble request, but so muddied the stream of an adjacent fountain that she was unable to drink of it. Jupiter, hearing the lamentations of Latona, and being moved with compassion, revenged himself upon the cruel reapers by changing them into frogs.

In the interior of the gardens we entered upon a capacious octagonal square, surrounded by eight beautifully arched fountains, while as many more might be seen at the termination of the intervening avenues, which branched off in arbours of beauty on each side. In the centre of the square is an ornamental pedestal, from the base of which, it is said, that when in action, most of the fountains may be simultaneously seen, casting their silvery spray in the air. The pedestal itself possesses considerable merit. Upon it are seen three figures. The god Mercury, with wings on his feet and head, and his wand in his right hand, stands looking up towards the goddess Pandora, who has her right hand raised and supporting the famous box of human misfortune and evils. Her face is raised, in the posture of invocation. The third figure represents Rancour, lying at the feet of the others, with an erected neck and hideous countenance, and one hand placed upon the thigh of Pandora, in the act of listening attentively to that which is taking place above.

Thus much for the fountains of La Granja. They are all of them equally interesting and worthy of description; but,

Digitized by Google

not to weary the reader, I shall content myself with merely alluding to them. We must not omit to mention, however, that the grand cascade of the gardens is one of the most magnificent in the world. It is several hundred feet in length, and rises from near the palace, in a succession of regular gradations, to the general reservoir above. The steps are of marble, while some of the lower ones are inlaid in a curious and beautiful manner. On certain festive occasions this cascade is brilliantly illuminated at night, the effect of which is said to be enchanting beyond expression. As a whole, the fountains of La Granja reflect much credit upon the ingenuity and taste of the Spanish people. Their crystal waters are not purer than the chaste sentiment of beauty which hovers around them.

On the ensuing day, (which we also spent at La Granja,) we revisited the gardens, and likewise examined the principal edifices of the town. The palace is very splendid, but decidedly French in its furniture and decorations. The paintings and statues are many of them of a very voluptuous character. Several strange and momentous events have transpired within the walls of this royal edifice which have exercised an important influence upon the modern history of Spain. The most conspicuous of these was the revocation of the Salic law, by Ferdinand VII., (by which law females had been rendered ineligible to the throne,) in order that his daughter Isabel might become the legitimate heiress to the

Digitized by Google

crown. By this deed, which was most probably accomplished through the powerful sway of Christina over the weak and flickering intellect of her husband, Don Carlos, the heir presumptive and brother of the King, was deprived of his rights and robbed of his expectations; and thus the torch of civil war was enkindled on the following year at the funeral pyre of the fickle monarch. He died September 29, 1833, and the subsequent history of Spain has been one of anarchy and blood.

In the cathedral, (if it may so be called,) is the tomb of Philip V., the founder and patron of this royal retreat. The inscription upon his marble sepulchre reads as follows:— "To Philip V., King of Spain, a great prince and good father, this monument is dedicated by his son Fernando VI."

The evening was spent by us quite pleasantly at the inn. It was the last night we were to pass at San Ildefonzo; we therefore enjoyed it in a quiet and social manner. The weather being rather cool, we sat together round a huge *brasero*, or pan of live coals, and having lighted our cigars, we cheerfully chatted away the hours of night. Our host had seen much of Spanish life, and was well versed in the wild and legendary lore of the country in which he had been born. He had no wife; yet according to his own story he had always been a favourite with the sex, and might have had almost the Queen herself had he been willing to hang

Digitized by Google

himself in the noose of matrimony. He was, indeed, a most jolly fellow! We became strongly prepossessed in his favour, and it was with a considerable degree of regret that I at last bade him farewell.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

SOME ACCOUNT OF SEGOVIA, AND THE ROMANTIC INCIDENTS WHICH THERE BEFEL US.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfast, we resumed our journey towards the ancient and interesting city of Segovia. It was a clear, sparkling day, and the country presented a very cheerful and pleasant aspect. As we jogged slowly on, my mind was constantly running upon the history of Gil Blas, and his reputed adventures in this particular part of Spain. The distance from La Granja to Segovia being only ten miles, we soon reached the end of our journey. At the gate we experienced a few moments' detention from the rapacious custom-house authorities, who insisted upon examining our luggage, though we had merely a small valise and carpet-bag between us. Their object was not difficult to penetrate, and was founded upon the well-known fact in human nature, that an enthusiastic traveller will, as a general

Digitized by Google

rule, patiently submit to a slight pecuniary loss, rather than experience the vexations of a troublesome delay. My companion, however, would not gratify them, so indignant was he at their impertinence; and after calling them by every complimentary appellation he could remember or devise, and threatening them with complaints to Government, and the consequent loss of their posts, we entered the limits of the dilapidated though picturesque-looking town. I could not but laugh at the recent ebullition of ire on the part of my guide, whom I highly commended for the zeal and courage he had displayed. Passing through the quaint and narrow streets, our unusual and foreign appearance created no small degree of excitement: who we were, and where we came from, were questions no doubt freely circulated among the populace. As for myself, I never felt more absolutely *out of the world;* everything about me appeared so odd, and old, and curious, that even a glimpse into a new planet could not have produced a more novel impression. My guide being well acquainted with the town, took me to the best hotel in the place, which, though a building of large size, with the remains of a Moorish square tower for its garret or upper story, was, beyond question, the most villanous establishment of the kind that I ever encountered in Spain. The landlord was a frightful-visaged, cross-tempered, and cut-throat-looking individual, with a large mouth, squinting eyes, and up-turned nose. Not a single good trait of character imparted a ray of geniality to his deep-

Digitized by Google

furrowed and hideous countenance; he was like a fiend in person, and the nature of a fiend seemed to glisten from his distorted eyes: he sometimes tried to laugh, but the demon-like grin which puckered up his monstrous mouth was a perfect revelation of the hideous hypocrisy that dwelt in his bosom. With a hollow pretension of politeness, he escorted me to a dirty and flea-haunted apartment, where he said he hoped I should be able to make myself comfortable. The idea of comfort being associated with such a place was not only a parody, but a positive insult. It was as if the devil should ask one of his victims to make himself comfortable in a chamber of his infernal realm.

The first thing of consequence we did was to ascend to the top of the Moorish tower, from whence an extensive view of the city and surrounding country offered itself to our contemplation. A crowded mass of antique and crumbling buildings lay in strange and fantastic confusion beneath us, while from the midst of them rise the giant forms of numerous churches and convents, and, above all, like a venerable chronicler of time and former ages, loomed the stupendous cathedral in the stern majesty and sublimity of true Gothic proportion. Dim in the distance towered the vast mountains, wooing to their soft summits the kisses of the sky!

The early history of Segovia is involved in considerable obscurity: the prevailing opinion entertained by the people seems to be that it owes its origin to Hercules, who is generally regarded as its founder. Certainly it is the oldest-

Digitized by Google

looking place I have ever seen. I felt indeed as if I was an antediluvian while carelessly loitering with my guide up and down its crowded and shabby streets. Nothing reminded me of the present save the multitude of ragged urchins who beset our path, evidently actuated by motives of curiosity.

The city of Segovia is built upon a long rocky knoll, rising precipitously from a valley, while on its northern side is a rapid stream, with houses, gardens, and shady groves pleasantly interspersed along its banks. Here is usually assembled an innumerable concourse of washerwomen, who in their gay petticoats of crimson, yellow, and blue, present an exceedingly striking and masquerade-like appearance. The town itself is encircled with a massive wall with round towers, which were raised during the reign of Alonzo VI. On account of its elevation, which is three thousand three hundred feet above the sea, the temperature is remarkably cool. The population has decreased to less than one-third its former number, and the city itself is but the mere shell of what it once was. Yet it abounds in curious antiquities, which well merit the attention of the historian or scholar. Every house seems hoary with age and pregnant with the legendary associations of by-gone centuries.

Commencing our rambles through the town, the first object to which we gave any special degree of attention, was the far-famed aqueduct of the ancient Romans. This is a most extraordinary work, and has survived in an astonishing manner the natural wear of centuries, and the devastations

Digitized by Google

of warfare. In its course it forms several angles, the combined length of which is about twenty-five hundred feet. The bends were obviously intended for the purpose of interposing a check to the force of the current, besides adding to the strength and durability of the tremendous structure. The arches, low and single where the ground is high, gradually increase in height with the slope of the valley, until, finally, becoming double, they attain the prodigious elevation of one hundred feet. The great marvel of the work consists, however, in its being constructed entirely upon mathematical principles, and without the use of mortar or cement of any kind. In its architecture, it unites perfect symmetry with the utmost grandeur and solidity. Its abutments are apparently slight, yet the experience of ages has proved that they are amply sufficient to fulfil the purpose for which they were erected.

During the latter part of the eleventh century, the aqueduct was seriously injured by the Moors, who demolished a number of its arches, which, however, were subsequently repaired in the sixteenth century by the order of Isabella. Concerning the origin of this wonderful structure, various contradictory opinions have been expressed, though none of them are of a perfectly satisfactory character. The most intelligent attribute it to Vespasian, while many of the old women firmly believe that it was raised by the devil in a single night, as a reward for the favors of a beautiful Segovian maid.

Digitized by Google

Having concluded our examination of the aqueduct, we strolled to the other side of the town, through a labyrinth of narrow and crooked streets, finally entering upon the grand *plaza* or square, in full view of the magnificent cathedral. As it was a *dia de fiesta*, or holyday, the plaza was densely thronged with a motley crowd of both sexes and all classes, engaged in every variety of amusement that indolence could suggest. The diversity of costume gave a marked air of gaiety to the scene. Every colour was there, from the deepest black to the most gorgeous scarlet. A more fantastic picture of human life could not be conceived. The effect, moreover, was considerably heightened by the contrast which the time-charred and rickety buildings around afforded. These were characterized by a striking irregularity and quaintness of style, that savoured more of antiquity than of modern times. It seemed as if we had been carried back several centuries into the past. I could scarcely believe myself an actual living, breathing, and acting, citizen of the year 1849.

My astonishment was still more increased when I entered the precincts of the sacred cathedral. It appeared to me little short of miraculous that so august and splendid an edifice should have a real existence in the midst of so forlorn and impoverished a city. The paltry and wretched dwellings by which it was surrounded, served only to heighten the sentiment of grandeur and sublimity with which I gazed upon it. Its architecture is Gothic—a style so eminently

Digitized by Google

adapted to produce those feelings which tend so powerfully to develope the religious sentiment.

As we entered, a funeral service was being performed. The two immense and beautiful organs were pealing forth their harmonious and solemn strains. In the centre of the grand aisle, between the *coro* and the altar, was a platform, and a coffin, over which was thrown a pall of black velvet, embroidered and fringed with gold. A procession of priests, bearing the Host, and dressed in robes of exceeding richness, were marching down the side aisles, some of them swinging in their hands vessels of incense, and distributing their fragrance on every side. The strangeness of the spectacle was well calculated to strike the mind with interest, and I can never forget the wild impression this scene made upon my imagination.

It was an odd transition, but from the cathedral we dove without ceremony into a *confiteria*, or confectioner's shop. Here we regaled ourselves with a cup of chocolate, almost the only luxury which is really better prepared in Spain than in any other country. It is made very thick, and is generally eaten (at least in *confiterias*) with slender sponge-cakes, such as would be called in English, ladies' fingers. Spaniards very seldom drink coffee, and it is quite impossible to procure it properly prepared even in Madrid. The consequence is, that strangers soon fall into the habit of using chocolate as a daily beverage, and having once done so, they become easily reconciled to the loss of tea and coffee, the

Digitized by Google

former, in a drinkable state, being equally as difficult to be procured as the latter. The Spaniards are a remarkably abstemious race. Though it is rare to meet with one who does not use wine in a greater or less degree, yet I do not remember to have seen a single instance of intoxication, during more than six months that I spent in the country. This is owing to the fact that where wines are cheap, spirituous liquors are but slightly in demand; while, on the contrary, in countries where wines are not produced, and consequently dear, inebriation is the most universal and destructive. One of the most delicious and refreshing drinks of Spain is the national *agraz*, which, in its cooling effect upon the system, is not to be surpassed by any liquid ever imbibed by thirsty man. It is simply composed of the unfermented juice of the grape, sweetened with clarified sugar, and diluted with a suitable quantity of pure water. The gods themselves never drank anything on a hot day more invigorating and delicious.

Desiring to see the famous Alcazar, in which, according to Le Sage, the adventurous Gil Blas was for several months imprisoned, my companion suggested that we should call at once upon the governor and request of him a special order to examine the edifice. This we accordingly did, and found the worthy old commandante alone in his studio, and seated in a capacious and old fashioned arm-chair, in a state of *dolce far niente*. I was introduced in a pompous style, and such a string of fictitious titles was given me by my guide,

Digitized by Google

that I was astonished at the fellow's impudence; but my risible faculties were so strongly excited, that it was with the greatest difficulty I could restrain my laughter. My guide, however, was as cool and self-possessed, as if the fate of the kingdom was depending upon each word he uttered. A stoic could not have looked more serious and impressive. The governor welcomed us in a peculiarly bland and cordial manner, and then begged us to be seated. As soon as we stated to him the object of our visit, he immediately wrote for us the order we desired. He then summoned a servant, and called for wine, with which we refreshed ourselves, drinking at the same time the venerable governor's health. This is a custom, however, which does not seem to be in vogue in Spain. Toasts, moreover, are very seldom given, even at public dinners. Bidding his Excellency, at length, good bye, we started off in the direction of the Alcazar. This is a large and curious building of stone, originally of Moorish construction, and has been employed at different periods, both as a fort, a palace, and a prison. At present it is used as a military college for the scientific education of cadets, and is, I believe, under very excellent management. Its position, for the purpose of a defensive stronghold, could not have been better selected. It stands upon the western point of the long rocky eminence on which the city is built, and besides being flanked with deep precipices on either side, has a wide and yawning moat in front, crossed only by a narrow bridge, which can in an instant be removed, and

Digitized by Google

every means of communication thus directly cut off. We made a complete survey of the interior of the edifice, but saw nothing particularly worthy of description. Several of the saloons are quite splendid, and the ceilings and cornices elaborately carved and gilded.

After leaving the Alcazar, we strolled along the banks of the stream, which runs at the base of the city on the northern side. Women innumerable, in petticoats of colours as various as the hues of the rainbow, were engaged in all the departments of washing and scrubbing. Such a chattering and clashing of human tongues, was perhaps never heard since the fall of Babel. It was perfectly overwhelming. As for my guide, he was soon smitten with one of the damsels, whom he stoutly declared to be one of the most charming creatures he had ever encountered. I advised him to commence a courtship and marry her; but he emphatically declared, that he would sooner hang himself!

Passing by a large and gloomy edifice, some distance below the spot where the women were washing, and which, by-the-way, bore a strong resemblance to a convent, my attention was arrested by the figure of a youthful maid, who seemed to be pensively leaning over one of the balconies. "Who knows," thought I, "but this may be some unhappy and captive nun, and myself the knight ordained by heaven to effect her deliverance?" So, mustering all my courage for the philanthropic enterprise, I accosted the beautiful creature in terms of easy salutation, and was blest in return

Digitized by Google

with a soft and sweet reply. But, alas! how perplexing and cruel are the sad mistakes to which mortals are oftentimes subjected. The building I had supposed to be a convent, turned out to be only a private residence; and as for my charming nun, a few moments' conversation sufficed to convince me, that she was no more than a romantic waiting-maid, who, I am half inclined to think, suspected us of being nothing better than a couple of wandering rakes.

Returning to the inn, my ferocious-looking landlord gave me to understand that dinner was ready for me. When he said this, a dismal leer, intended by him for a smile, lit up for an instant his diabolical countenance. Perceiving no just cause for this exhibition of counterfeit mirth, I felt strongly inclined to pull the nose of my ungentlemanly host. But on second thoughts I patiently desisted. Turning to my companion, I saw at a glance that something of an amusing nature was occupying his mind, which he had hitherto refrained from disclosing to me. "What the d—l," said I, in wrath, "is the matter with you and our ugly-faced landlord? I should very much like to know what could produce a laughable impression upon such a mackerel-visaged scoundrel. He tried very hard to smile, but the muscles of his face, unused to such exercise, failed in the attempt, and left a species of sardonic grin upon his uncouth features. It is my firm belief that none but men of good hearts can produce a genuine laugh—a laugh of true humour, and of soul. The laughter of a demon is more terrible than his frown."

Digitized by Google

My companion did not reply to me, but maintaining his silence, we walked into the banquet-hall together. This was a large and naked apartment, with no furniture save a few chairs, and an antiquated clock that stood in one of its corners, and ticked so loudly as to create a reverberation from the opposite side of the room. In the centre, like a small island in the midst of the boundless ocean, was a small round table, with a tureen of soup smoking upon it, and to my astonishment, plates arranged for two persons. Who could my companion be? and what right had any one to furnish me with a companion without consulting me? were interrogatories that instantly forced themselves upon my mind. I was not long, however, in doubt. No sooner had I taken my seat than—unexpected visitation!—a door suddenly opened, and in stalked a tall lady, habited in black from head to foot, who, without so much as honouring me with a glance, deliberately approached the table, and in a dignified manner, seated herself in the vacant chair. If an apparition had presented itself, I could not have been more bewildered and astounded. Who could this sombre dame be? and from whence could she have emanated? It was in vain that I endeavoured to penetrate the mystery; the thing seemed too obscure for elucidation, so I gave up in despair, and resolved politely to play the agreeable. It was a strange predicament truly for a young bachelor and enthusiastic admirer of the sex! My guide had left the room, and I was therefore absolutely alone with a woman whom I had never

Digitized by Google

seen before in my life. But silence was appalling: we were therefore driven into conversation, or we should have frightened each other to death by a supernatural stillness. She gave me to understand that she was a native of France, and had been for upwards of a year engaged in travelling through the different provinces of Spain. She was apparently about thirty years of age, of a rather prepossessing appearance and agreeable manners, while her conversation manifested a strong intellect, as well as a refined and thorough education. This surprised me the more, as I had at first suspected her of being a lady of rather questionable character. She certainly was a most eccentric woman; and though I was far from being in any danger of falling in love with her, yet I am free to confess that she entertained me considerably by her various accounts of Spanish life, which were entirely new to me. In the morning she left in the diligence for Madrid. Neither my companion nor the landlord were able to give me any satisfactory information regarding her. The former supposed her a French lady who was canvassing Spain in quest of intrigues and adventures; while the latter gave us his opinion that she was a bluestocking of the George Sand order, whose object was to produce eventually a volume of her personal travels in the Spanish kingdom. It may have been a malicious slander, yet an officer with whom I became acquainted on the following day, assured me that the "mysterious French lady" was no better than she should be; and he also furnished

Digitized by Google

revelations concerning the celebrated Lola Montes much of the same nature. Though, of course, he paraded no reason for my doubting the truth of these extraordinary statements, yet I am convinced that those who talk the most of such matters are, as a general rule, the least in favour with the ladies.

Before taking our departure from the city, we followed a funeral train to the campo santo, as the cemeteries of the dead are termed in Spain. The deceased was a young and beautiful girl, whose bridal was to have taken place in the course of a few weeks, and lo, she was now being carried in melancholy procession to the silent tomb. It was a sad end of the brightest hopes of youth. Her death had been as sudden as it was lamentable. The chill blast of death blew over her, and the sweet blossom faded and fell before it had expanded into a flower.

The coffin was of snowy whiteness, with a wreath of roses at the head, in token of the youth, innocence, and beauty of the departed. This was borne to the grave by a chosen body of pall-bearers. Before and after the corpse, walked a long line of mourners, and priests, and children, each of them bearing a lighted torch in his hand. As they marched, they chanted a funeral dirge, low, full, and harmonious, which added much to the affecting solemnity of the scene On arriving at the cemetery, we found that it consisted of an area of several acres, enclosed by a stone wall, completely filled with catacombs for the reception of the dead. These

Digitized by Google

were already so populous, that but very few places were unoccupied. In front of each cell was a small marble slab announcing merely the name and age of the deceased occupant. The brevity of these inscriptions conveyed to me an useful lesson. The epitaphs upon our tombstone signify but little; and are as much disregarded by the living as the dead. Rather let our epitaphs be written by a life of useful action upon the hearts of those who live after us.

I halted for a moment to contemplate the grave of a physician, who had survived to the remarkable age of ninety-two.

Often when most affected with solemn thoughts, do the drollest ideas steal imperceptibly into the mind, and as I looked upon the final resting place of this Sangrado, it occurred to me that formerly many of the dead around him might possibly have been his patients, and that last of all he himself had finally given up the ghost.

I left the graveyard with feelings of deep humility and sadness, and walked listlessly back towards the city, meditating upon the recent lesson of mortality I had gleaned from the voiceless tombs. In the morning we took a final leave of Segovia, and set out on our return to Madrid. After a cold and tedious ride over the mountains, we once more mingled with the ocean of human life ebbing and flowing within the walls of that peculiar city.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

A PEEP INTO THE "ORIENTAL SALOONS"—EXTRAORDINARY FEMALE VISITATION—OUR PRESENTATION AT COURT—DINNER WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, AND BALL AT THE PALACE OF QUEEN CHRISTINA.

Days and weeks passed by, and I still lingered in the Spanish metropolis, reluctant to tear myself away from its numerous enchantments and pleasures. One day, while taking my regular dancing lesson with my companions, a most unexpected visit was paid me. An old school-fellow had recently arrived in Madrid, and having ascertained from a member of our club the place of our rendezvous, had thus suddenly presented himself before me. He was certainly one of the drollest and best-hearted of mortals. I was delighted to meet him, and the more so as he was almost the only one of my own countrymen whom I had encountered in Spain. Returning immediately with him to my rooms,

Digitized by Google

he entered into an elaborate detail of his travels, winding up by telling me that he was on his way to Egypt and Jerusalem, and conjuring me by all the memories of former times to accompany him. I assured him that this would be impossible, though nothing could give me more delight than his agreeable society. I told him that I had resolved to see as much of Spain as possible, now that the opportunity was offered me, and could not give up my prospects of Spanish adventure for any considerations whatever. He then generously replied that, on condition I would leave Madrid in the course of a few weeks, he would abandon for the present all his plans of Eastern travel, and proceed with me leisurely through the southern provinces of Spain. To this proposition I gave a joyful assent, and was highly pleased with the prospect of having so lively and vivacious a companion.

I moreover made him a member of our dancing club, and persuaded him to enlist himself without delay among the favoured pupils of Don Philippe, our accomplished and jovial teacher of the Spanish language. My companion applied himself with such assiduity, that although by no means studiously inclined, he made such extraordinary progress in his new pursuit, that in about two weeks Don Philippe assured him he was amply qualified to commence a courtship, if not to carry one forward to a successful termination. However, as my friend was too inveterate in his bachelor principles to attempt or even to think of anything of the kind, he seemed

Digitized by Google

in but little danger of being presented with a volume or even bundle of "Rejected Addresses!"

Being gregariously disposed, our friendly visitations were numerous. Every evening we had quite an extensive social gathering in our own apartments, which were in fact the head-quarters of all the English and Americans in the city. Our nocturnal amusements consisted chiefly in singing, guitar-playing, dancing, smoking, and easy conversation. Those pleasant evenings, I venture to say, will never be erased from the memory of any one of us. How sweetly and quickly the hours slipped by, and how brightly glimmered the moments as the restless wheel of time rolled on! Among the number of our guests was a Spaniard, who afforded us much entertainment by the prodigal display of his musical powers. He was a skilful master of the guitar, as well as a vocalist of remarkable merit. He and Don Philippe occasionally favoured us with a national duet, and such was the enthusiasm generally created, that most of us were accustomed to join uproariously in the different choruses.

A visit of so peculiar a character was made us one morning, that I cannot resist the temptation of recording it. Its only premonition was a gentle tapping at our chamber door. On investigating the cause of this slight disturbance, what was our surprise and consternation, on beholding two young ladies at the threshold of our apartment, who after saluting us

Digitized by Google

in a respectful manner, requested of us the favor of a private interview. This we readily granted. Though nearly paralyzed with astonishment, we summoned sufficient resolution to invite the damsels into our room, where, having seated themselves at our request, we begged of them, without fear or reserve, to communicate in what manner we could be of service to them. They returned us a thousand thanks, with that irresistible grace and eloquence of style for which the damsels of Spain are so remarkable, and then proceeded in a calm and methodical course of conversation, to unfold to us the secret cause which had prompted their present visit. The elder of them, who acted in the capacity of chief orator, stated that they had been particularly desirous, and had instituted manifold inquiries for some time past, in order to meet with some person who was acquainted with the Spanish and English languages, and that they had at last been directed to us. Fearing that we might disregard or misunderstand a written communication on the subject, they had resolved, upon mature deliberation, to call upon us personally. She then introduced herself as the wife of Col. ——, and stated that the young lady who accompanied her was her sister-in-law. Having advanced thus far, without losing her self-possession, she went on to say, that she had an English relative in London (a godfather I believe) to whom she wished to write an English letter, at the same time informing me that she had been taking lessons in the English language for several months, with the especial view

Digitized by Google

of inditing this projected epistle. However, having some doubts of her own ability to accomplish this in a manner satisfactory to herself, and not wishing to let her teacher into the secret, she had decided to write the letter in Spanish, and then get some kind and accommodating gentleman to translate it for her into good Anglo-Saxon. In this way she thought to produce such a profound impression upon the tender heart of her old godfather, as to induce him, in a paroxysm of generosity, to make her some substantial acknowledgment immediately, and perhaps afterwards tenderly to remember her in his last will and testament. Of course her modesty did not allow her actually to say as much as this to a perfect stranger, yet the tenor of her note and the explanatory commentaries she made upon it, were sufficient to convince any one of the slightest penetration, that the real object for which it was written, was—money. I took her neatly folded epistle, and having conned it, told her that if she would wait, I would translate it for her at once, or send it to her on the following day. She said that she would remain if it was convenient for me to attend to the matter at that time. I replied that it would afford me a sincere gratification to fulfil her wishes, without a moment's delay. I then proceeded to make a free translation of the touching document, which doubtless must have amused the old fellow exceedingly, in case he ever received it. It was a chain of bombastic eulogies and enthusiastic compliments, from beginning to end. As soon as I had completed the

Digitized by Google

epistle, I presented it to the lady, who was so overwhelmed with gratitude, that she gave us her address, and invited us most cordially to visit her whenever we felt inclined, assuring us of as hospitable a reception as it would be in her power to give. They then took leave of us, evidently well pleased with the result of their visit. When our club assembled in the evening, this incident and many sage speculations were brought forward, which however were not confined to this particular matter, but were extended to the general state of society in the metropolis.

"Come," said Don Philippe to us one evening, "come with me to a ball at the Salon de Oriente, where you will see a picture of Madrilenian life, too characteristic to be overlooked—a miniature of its beauty, its taste, and its profligacy combined, which no stranger who visits the metropolis should fail to note, and studiously observe." Having nothing of greater importance before us, we assented forthwith to the proposal of our entertaining teacher, who escorted us thither, as soon as we had put ourselves in proper trim for the occasion. The first glimpse of the ball-room was like a fairy scene. It was built in imitation of an Oriental palace, tastefully painted and illuminated with glittering chandeliers, in the most brilliant manner. The hall was quite thronged with persons of both sexes, a large proportion of whom were engaged in dancing the "Polka Mazúrka," to the inspiring music of a full and splendid band. So exciting was the spectacle, that it was with the greatest difficulty we

Digitized by Google

restrained ourselves for a few moments from rushing into the midst of the throng, and finally we broke from all restraint, and bade defiance to the counsels of Don Philippe, who evidently regarded us in the light of a couple of hot-headed youths, whose harvest of wild oats had not yet been fully gathered. Away we dashed into the very midst of the merry sport, as if, with military ardor, we intended to carry the place by storm; having secured a pair of female prizes, whose brilliant eyes, like loadstones, had drawn us towards them. We mingled with the concourse of laughing dancers and became ourselves the gayest of the gay. The bright glances which gleamed around us, from every female eye, were softer than the blushes of the moonbeams! Every cheek was flushed with pleasure; every lip was red with joy! The men were wild with frolic, and the youthful damsels intoxicated with delight. Among the former, whom should I recognise, to my infinite surprise and astonishment, but my faithful guide to Segovia and the Escurial. In his dress he was completely metamorphosed into a fashionable gentleman, with white waistcoat and gloves, and the remainder of his suit of fine black broad-cloth. In manners, he had not a superior in the room. Approaching me with respect, but with the polished ease of a man well acquainted with the world, he saluted us with unaffected cordiality, and then invited us to partake of some refreshments with him in an adjoining apartment, expressly intended and adapted for this purpose. We did not wish to offend him by a refusal, and therefore assented to his friendly

465073 A

proposition. Seating ourselves at a table together, an immense bowl, supplied with a certain quantity of iced lemonade was first brought and placed in the centre of the table before us. Two or three bottles of beer were then opened and poured into this general receptacle, the contents of which were stirred up briskly with a kind of ladle or large spoon. Each of us then helped himself to the frothy compound, which, though exceedingly agreeable to the palate, did not produce the slightest inebriating effect.

Turning to me, my quondam guide asked if I had passed a pleasant evening. I replied in the affirmative, and told him I had been much struck with his skilful performance upon "the light fantastic toe." He seemed delighted with the compliment, and praised us highly in return, for the manner in which we had conducted ourselves throughout the entertainment. "These saloons," said he, "are resorted to by all classes of gentlemen in the metropolis, without distinction of rank or station, though they do not sustain so high a public reputation now as they possessed in former years. This is owing to the fact, that ladies of station no longer honor them with their presence, save during the period of the 'masquerades,' when it is said that even the Queen herself has mingled among the general throng, confident that her disguise would secure her from either scrutiny or recognition. The females whom you have seen here to night," continued my guide, "notwithstanding their modest appearance and genteel manners, are most of them either

Digitized by Google

kept-mistresses or public courtezans, while the younger ones, apparently under the protection of their mothers and aunts, by whom they are accompanied, have been brought hither as to a market, in order to secure an '*amante*' or lover, and make the most profitable sale of their charms! This may sound very horrible to your ears, yet I assure you that it is truth. You can scarcely have any conception of the extent of vice which prevails in Madrid, nor of the lightness and indifference with which it is regarded by the community. She who would be called by an evil name in any other country, is only regarded as a gay and lively girl in Spain, so low is the general standard of women. Absolute penury, and the want of respectable employment, have tended to produce this deplorable result, which must necessarily ensue, wherever the poverty and mismanagement of a government, and the consequent inactivity of industry and commerce, does not create sufficient occupation for the poorer classes, to keep them above starvation, without having recourse to vice. It really offends me," continued my guide with considerable warmth, "to hear a noble people abused for the existence of faults which do not properly belong to them." "Bravo," cried Don Philippe, "good, good, good! Down with the government! Send the cursed ministers to the infernals, and we'll have a grand Spanish republic. Then you'll see if the Spaniards are not as industrious and brave, and the women as virtuous and chaste, as those of any other land under the sun. Give the people a fair chance, and they will rise, like

Digitized by Google

the bird you call a phœnix, and become a great and powerful nation. Success, I say, to the glorious cause of liberty and republicanism in Spain!"

"What a couple of orators you have become!" burst out Ronalds. "Verily, a modern Demosthenes and a Cicero! Ay, methinks," said he, "you imbibed too potently of that lemon beer; and as for you, Don Philippe, if you don't join a temperance society, I'll not take another lesson of you, by Jove! You are both of you addled; I wouldn't give a fig for the republicanism or morality of either of you. You talk loudly, but your talk is nothing but gas; or the effervescing of stomachs filled with acid, and craniums overflowing with the fumes of wine!"

My two companions burst into a hearty laugh at this speech, and told Ronalds he was rather hard upon them for their ebullition of philanthropy and moral zeal.

We then left the hall. In our course to our lodgings, we crossed the large central square, which may be said to constitute the heart of the city, and is called the "Puerta del Sol." The moon was full and shone brightly, and the scene was strikingly impressive—a picture of quiet grandeur and repose. The strain of a solitary guitar alone fell upon our ears, while the only human objects we beheld were the muffled forms of the "Serenos," or watchmen, standing with their spears and lanterns at the corner of every street. Nothing could be more picturesque or formidable than the appearance which they thus presented!

Digitized by Google

These Serenos, in spite of their terrible aspect, are exceedingly kind to strangers who have mistaken their way, and not unfrequently accompany them for some distance, to the street, and even the house, of which they are in search. On these occasions, they generally expect a trifling remuneration for their trouble; and if it is convenient for you to present them with a choice cigar, do so, without fail, and you may depend upon it that they will always stand ready to manifest their gratitude for your kindness, should the circumstances of the uncertain future ever afford them an opportunity. It is not the value of a gift, but the manner in which it is given, that finds its way to the heart of a Spaniard. You may present him with a heavy purse of gold, or a casket of diamonds, but if it is done with a show of ostentation, or with the sinister view of exacting certain services from him in return, he will despise you with his whole soul; and though stern necessity may prevent him from casting your treasure to the dogs, yet no grateful recollection will linger in his mind, but on the contrary, he will never think of your base and selfish hypocrisy, without feelings of the utmost contempt. On the other hand, any trifling act of genuine kindness, however insignificant it may appear to you, will enshrine itself in his bosom for an everlasting remembrance.

On the following week, Victor B— and myself were presented to the Queen. As the court was in mourning, and her Majesty in a condition of *peculiar interest* to the

Digitized by Google

Spanish nation, our presentation was in consequence rather a private affair. Her Majesty received us without any of her ministers or usual attendants on such an occasion, in a small drawing-room, where our interview was as brief as the polite formalities of bowing in and backing out would allow. Had one of us tripped on our swords, while making retrograde movements towards the door, I am inclined to imagine that the catastrophe would somewhat have affected the solemnity of her Majesty's countenance. As it was, she maintained the most stoical gravity of demeanour, and merely said a few words, expressive of the intense degree of honour and delight she experienced in welcoming such illustrious personages to her palace. We were glad enough to get back to our humble habitations, and disrobe ourselves of the official harness in which we had been fettered; and having gathered the members of the club together, we gave them an account of the ordeal through which we had recently passed. The Queen, her history, her intrigues, were of course the chief topics of conversation during the evening; and to my mind, these subjects were rather roughly and freely handled. If one-tenth of the stories circulated about her Majesty in Madrid be true, her personal character cannot, to say the least, be much above that of the generality of the young ladies who frequent the "Oriental Saloons." Change positions, and the difference could not easily be perceived. But upon this point we will not enlarge;—our respect for the Queen far transcends our

Digitized by Google

opinion of the *woman*. That she may live, however, to repent of the follies and indiscretions of youth, and become a model and ornament to her sex, like the lovely monarch of Britain's realm, is our sincere and ardent prayer.

Soon after our presentation at Court, we were invited to dine with General Narvaez, the Prime Minister of the Queen. The entertainment was in every respect superb, and worthy of the distinguished personage by whom it was given. Every thing was in the French style, and of the most superior quality. Though I made an exceedingly moderate repast, scarcely touching an article that was placed before me, yet I venture to say that my plate was changed at least *thirty* times. The service was of the most beautiful china, while the knives, forks, and spoons of the dessert, were of solid gold. The general effect of the table was both that of taste and elegance. The banqueting-room was illuminated by an infinite number of candles, and, though unpretending in its decorations, was nevertheless very rich and appropriate. The conduct of our host was characterized by a remarkable degree of good breeding. Though no toasts were given or healths drunk, yet conviviality and lively conversation prevailed, and the affair passed off to the entire satisfaction of every one present. The guests on this occasion numbered about fifty, the greater part of whom were Spaniards and officers of the Government. General Narvaez played the agreeable in a gentlemanly manner, though he never for a moment departed from the high dig-

Digitized by Google

nity due to his position, or the proud and lofty bearing so eminently characteristic of the man. In his personal appearance he is not above the middle height, rather inclined to stoutness, and possessing a stern and impressive countenance, set in a frame of raven whiskers, and lit up with a pair of keen and darkly-glittering eyes. He looks like a man of indomitable courage and changeless will: and seems admirably calculated to win the confidence and excite the admiration of a rude and resolute soldiery. Though not an orator, yet he has a deep and full-toned voice, which arrests the attention and falls upon the ear like the low booming of distant artillery. Since he has been in power, the condition of public affairs in Spain has been gradually improving; and a greater degree of security to life and property maintained. He is a strict disciplinarian, a shrewd and accomplished statesman, a wily diplomatist, and a man of strong and well-balanced intellect. Of all the leading men in Spain, he appears the best adapted for the elevated post which he now occupies, and which I trust he will be enabled to hold for a long series of years.

A few days before my departure for Madrid, I attended a grand ball at the palace of Christina—the mother of the present Queen. The spectacle was the most splendid that it was ever my good fortune to behold. The number of gentlemen and ladies in attendance could not have been less than six hundred. The entrance hall was perfectly unique and beautiful. It was quadrangular, and surmounted in the

Digitized by Google

middle with a small glass dome, from the centre of which was suspended an ornamental lamp. This cupola or dome was supported by marble columns, while, in the midst of the space thus enclosed, a miniature fountain was throwing into the air its playful waters, from amid the foliage of a little grove of orange and lemon trees tastefully arranged around it. The floor of the hall was composed of blocks of polished stone.

Passing the hall, we entered the first of a long suite of magnificently furnished apartments, where our names were announced to the officer at the door, and echoed from room to room, until we finally reached the grand chamber of reception, where we immediately paid our respects to the Queen Christina, who bowed gracefully in token of acknowledgment. Though a woman of large size, yet every motion she made was marked by a refined ease of manner and suavity of mien, which at once prepossessed us in her favour. She is a woman of powerful mind, and appears perfectly aware of the superior nature of her endowments. The Queen was likewise present, and, to my surprise, was decidedly the plainest dressed lady in the room: her dress was white, variegated with artificial leaves, while about her head was a chaplet of simple flowers. The only ornament she wore was a large diamond cross suspended from her neck. The entire simplicity of her appearance afforded a striking contrast to the gorgeous display of gauzes, and laces, and jewels, about her. Had I not known which of

Digitized by Google

the ladies present was actually the Queen, I should have been at a great loss to decide; and the real sovereign would probably have been the last one I should have selected. The entertainments of the evening were enlivened by the music of a fine band. Her Majesty, I observed, danced several times with considerable skill and spirit, and opened the first quadrille of the evening, with Prince George of Prussia for her consort. The ladies generally exhibited an extraordinary degree of symmetry and beauty—they were exquisitely dressed, and their hair, in many instances, was most elaborately braided, and completely studded with diamonds and other precious stones. It was an hour or two after midnight when we retired; we slept but little during the remainder of the night—our thoughts were too busily employed for slumber: the recent scene of voluptuous splendour we had beheld, and which constituted the last event of importance we experienced in Madrid, thronged our minds with images that murder sleep.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

TRIP TO TOLEDO—THE "OLLA PODRIDA"—THE FAIR TERESINA—THE CURIOSITIES AND WONDERS OF THE CITY.

It was on a clear and transparent morning in the latter part of January, 1850, that we bade farewell to the enchantments of Madrid, and took our seats in the diligence for Toledo. This, the ancient and deeply interesting capital of the Goths, is distant about fifty miles from the Spanish metropolis, and is a place so peculiar in its present aspect, and characterized by such thrilling associations of the past, that no traveller should on any account neglect visiting it. As circumstances would only allow us to spend a day or two in that time-honoured city, we engaged seats in the Seville diligence previous to leaving Madrid, intending to make our arrangements so as to join it at Aranjuez, and thus avoid the inconvenience of a return to the capital. Our journey was not marked with any incidents worthy of note;

Digitized by Google

the country continued to wear an uninteresting and monotonous appearance, and scarcely an object did we encounter on the road in any degree calculated to impart a pleasing sense of variety to the scene. About midway on the route we passed through the royal town of Aranjuez, and were delighted with its beauty, even in the mournful desolation of winter. This spot, like La Granja, is a favourite resort of the Spanish court during the sultry months of summer, and is termed appropriately "the happy valley of Castile." We tarried only a few moments, merely to change our mules and refresh ourselves with a hasty repast. Proceeding on at a brisk pace for four or five hours, we at length beheld the famous city to which we were bound, standing in impressive majesty upon her seven hills of rock, and gilded around with the foaming waters of the Tagus, while from a deep gorge of the mountains this angry river was dashing its raging torrent into the plain below with a loud gushing and murmuring sound.

Entering the city, we threaded our way slowly through the narrow streets, and finally stopped at an antiquated inn, where we succeeded in obtaining lodgings. Though as uncomfortable and gloomy in its internal arrangements, as establishments of this kind generally are in Spain, it was of enormous size and solid construction, and externally bore the impress of dilapidated grandeur and magnificence. Our landlady, who seemed a bustling, good-natured dame, desirous of gratifying her vanity by making a favourable im-

Digitized by Google

pression upon her guests, escorted us triumphantly into a vast apartment, the only furniture of which appeared to consist of five or six worm-eaten chairs, a common brown table, and a couple of dirty-looking bedsteads. Being rather cool, we immediately ordered a *brasero*, which was brought to us after a short delay, by a young and laughing maid, who was evidently little afraid of foreigners, and moreover seemed not at all disinclined to enter into conversation with us. We gathered from her that she was only seventeen years of age, and that she had spent her entire life thus far within the walls of Toledo, which in her estimation was the queen city of the world.

Lighting our cigars, we sat near the brasero, and endeavoured to keep ourselves cheerful and warm, while the lovely damsel we have described was busily engaged in preparing an evening meal for us. These braseros emit much more heat than would be supposed, and in a small and close room are sufficient to maintain almost any degree of temperature, though in case the charcoal which is used is not previously burnt in the open air until its pernicious gases are entirely dissipated, the consequences must be certainly injurious, if not absolutely dangerous.

Instances of suffocation arising from an ignorant neglect of the proper precautions, or from too brief an exposure of the charcoal before bringing it into the house, are of occasional occurrence in the northern parts of Spain. The brasero usually consists of a heavy copper pan, two feet in

Digitized by Google

diameter, with rings on two of its sides, and surrounded with a broad rim, by means of which it is sustained in a circular platform of wood, fitted for its reception, and sufficiently elevated upon wooden legs to prevent the metal pan from touching the floor. In the palaces of the nobility these vessels are made in an ornamental manner, and sometimes enclosed in an immense china vase, with numerous little holes at the top for the escape of the heated air. As for a stove, I never saw such an article in the country. At present it would be exceedingly difficult to transport them into the interior from abroad, but if a railroad is ever laid down from Cadiz to Madrid, a cargo of cooking stoves will prove a most profitable speculation.

The beautiful Teresina having announced to us that dinner was ready, we lost no time in seating ourselves at the table, for notwithstanding we were actually in a city so renowned in romance and poetry as Toledo, we were in spite of the association as rapacious as a couple of bears.

Spanish cookery is at best so abominable to the unaccustomed palate, that a keen appetite is indispensably necessary to the bare toleration of it. One gets gradually over his refined tastes and epicurean prejudices, however, and perhaps eventually becomes fond of the very dish which he had at first regarded with the utmost aversion. It is as strange as true, that those things we dislike the most on our first experience of them, often become in the course of time the most relished and esteemed by us. Where is the man to

Digitized by Google

whom the first puff of a cigar was agreeable? and where is the inveterate consumer of the weed who could at once abandon its use without a single thought of regret? Then do not wonder, kind reader, that any Spanish dish, which seems almost an insult to your uncultivated taste, should be eaten with such gusto by the natives of the country, as well as by foreigners whose longer residence and greater appetites have given them a power of appreciation superior to your own.

Upon my entry into Spain, the oil and garlic so freely made use of by the national cooks, nearly forced me into starvation, but by degrees my fastidiousness vanished, and I became even bold enough, before a fortnight had expired, to taste, without dissatisfaction, the celebrated "*olla podrida*," so universally admired in every province of the Peninsula. This is a sublime compound, in the preparation of which all the ingenuity and genius of a Spanish cook are brought into requisition;—his reputation is staked upon this die, and upon it is based whatever claims he may entertain of immortality. Its ingredients are multifarious, and the mode of mixing them elaborate and difficult. Two earthenware pots are generally used, though one is sometimes made to answer the purpose. In the former case, the different meats, such as a chicken, a slice of beef, and a piece of bacon, are put together into one of the vessels and boiled for a short time over the fire; they are then allowed to simmer for several hours. In the other pot or pan the various vegetables are

Digitized by Google

collected. These consist of beets, carrots, beans, peas, onions, celery, garlic, lettuces, and long pepper: these are likewise permitted to simmer for four or five hours. Finally, the savoury contents of both utensils are emptied into an enormous dish, the meat being placed in the centre and the vegetables built up around like the wall of a city. It is then ready to be placed upon the table, and worthy of being devoured by monarchs. On the present occasion, however, two humble adventurers alone brought their appetites to bear upon the smoking and luxurious mass, while the fair Teresina, who stood in silence near the door, smiled incessantly at the fierce ardour with which we attacked and vanquished the national dish before us. The vegetable wall gave way before our terrific charge, and the wounded beef and lacerated bacon fell in huge slices amid the awful ruins.

As soon as we had breakfasted in the morning, we enjoined Teresina to secure for us the services of a guide capable of escorting us through the intricate windings of the city, and pointing out to us the principal objects of interest within its limits. The damsel, having promised to fulfil our commands to the very letter, soon returned to our apartment in company with a handsome young man, whom she modestly introduced to us by the name of Carlos Virgo. The manner in which she performed this delicate piece of courtesy, the downcast expression of her eyes, the rosy color of her cheeks, and the faltering accents of her voice, assured us beyond a doubt that the noble-looking youth she had

Digitized by Google

brought into our presence was, in reality, the possessor of her affections and her heart. We could scarcely suppress a slight feeling at the discovery, though we were not surprised that one of so majestic a bearing, of such elegant features, and gentle deportment, should have succeeded in rendering himself agreeable to the damsel. Carlos told us afterwards, in the confiding simplicity of his nature, the whole history of the affair, and concluded by giving us to understand that the lovely Teresina was to become his bride in the course of a few months. Happy Carlos!

Nothing can be more labyrinthine than the streets of Toledo. They are exceedingly narrow, tortuous, steep, and precipitous. The city is purposely constructed in this quaint and curious manner, both for the sake of coolness and security. The houses are of the most gigantic height, and of extremely solid architecture, while nearly every one of them has the appearance of having been erected centuries ago. A stern air of reserve and mystery seems to hang over them, and you experience a longing curiosity to become acquainted with their unknown occupants, and to obtain an insight into the secret character of their hidden life. Though you are aware that thousands of human beings are living and breathing around you, yet it is only at intervals that you encounter a solitary individual. An intense and irrefrangible silence envelopes the city like a spell. As you walk, the echo of your own footsteps is the only sound which meets your ear. The stillness of a sepulchre could not be more

Digitized by Google

appalling. It seemed to us that a city of the dead could not be more dismally quiet than this *cemetery of the living*.

The aspect of the place did not at all suit the temperament of my friend Ronalds, who affirmed that the sooner we got out of it the better, for that he was already seriously threatened with an attack of the blue devils. Our guide Carlos, however, appeared to regard matters in a different light. To him Toledo was the paradise of earth—an Eden, of which Teresina was the Eve. He declared, in a burst of patriotic enthusiasm, that there was no spot like it in Spain, and that Spain was the garden of the world! "The people of Toledo," said he, "are more intelligent, more virtuous, and speak the Spanish language with more correctness, than the inhabitants of any other city in the entire kingdom. I love Toledo beyond all other places in the universe, and could not be induced to leave it for any earthly consideration. I thank Heaven that I was born within the circle of its walls, and trust that when I die my bones may slumber undisturbed within its 'Sacred Field.'"

Arriving at the Alcazar, we entered the splendid ruins of this ancient fortress and palace. We were at once struck with admiration at its stupendous size and superb architecture. Though rebuilt and repaired by Charles V. in the sixteenth century, it was completely demolished in the late war of succession by the Portuguese, who set fire to it, and riddled it from "turret to foundation stone." The inner *patio* or court-yard is surrounded with marble pillars and

Digitized by Google

broken arches, portions of staircases, and dilapidated galleries, but gives one, even in its present desolation, a grand conception of the beauty and magnificence which must once have reigned within its deserted halls. We ascended to the very highest points, and even there found moss and grasses growing beneath our feet. The view afforded us was transcendent. On one side we looked down upon the Tagus and the wild country beyond, while on the opposite side the entire city of Toledo, with its crowded mass of red-tiled houses, and its sublime cathedral towering in indescribable grandeur above the forest of ordinary edifices, was all included within the scope of our vision. Carlos pointed out to us, with an evident feeling of pride, the most wonderful buildings of the city, and descanted at large upon the sieges through which they had passed, and the particular history which belonged to each of them. Everything relating to the Toledo of the present, or of the past, was as familiar to him as the alphabet. Every house was known to him, as well as every wild tale which tradition had associated with its origin. Nothing escaped his observation, and nothing did he fail to relate which he thought in any way calculated to entertain and interest us, or to redound to the credit of the venerable city, whose child and eulogizer he was so proud to be. Any praise you bestowed upon the marvels of Toledo, he appeared to regard as a compliment to himself, while a single word of disparagement he would have considered almost like a personal insult!

Digitized by Google

From the Alcazar we proceeded to the Cathedral, which, next to that of Seville, is considered the finest in Spain. It is built in the Gothic style, though externally it possesses but feeble claims to either symmetry or beauty. It is of huge and overwhelming size, and gives one the idea of a vast work of nature, rather than the creation of human art. The first stone of the present edifice was laid by St. Ferdinand, and the completion of the cathedral took place in the year 1492. Though externally its appearance is so cold and forbidding, yet its interior is radiant with splendour and beauty. The gothic windows contain some admirably stained glass, with designs of a scriptural character. The chapels are numerous and richly adorned with paintings and old marble tombs, some of which are sculptured in a highly beautiful and elaborate manner. Among the relics which are shown, is an image of the Holy Virgin, made of black wood, elegantly carved. This is placed upon a glittering throne of silver, and surmounted with a gilt canopy, sustained by a group of pillars. Upon her head is a crown, composed of precious stones, with a diamond cross in front, while upon grand occasions she is gorgeously attired in garments of brocade, profusely ornamented with pearls and jewels of various kinds. But our space will not allow us to enter much into detail. The history, and a full description of the wonders of the cathedral of Toledo would alone be sufficient for several volumes. It is one of the most august edifices that religion ever reared, and for many a coming century will it stand,

Digitized by Google

bidding defiance to the withering blasts of time, and teaching to the children of the present day the lessons of ages which have vanished for ever!

Continuing our walk through a series of narrow lanes, we at length entered the *Juderia*, or former Jews' quarter of the town. Here we found, in a state of partial preservation, two very old and remarkable synagogues. Their appearance within only gave us a melancholy proof of their former splendour. Time has erased most of the finer work and architectural embroidery, yet the numerous pillars and Moorish horse-shoe arches which still remain, have a most peculiar charm in the eyes of the stranger. The Moorish-gothic and Hebrew styles are here seen blended together, the united effect of which is incongruous and striking in the extreme. At present, there are no Jews, acknowledging themselves as such, in Spain. A ferocious war of extermination was carried on against them in the fifteenth century, by Isabella, which terminated in their complete expulsion from the country. Being thus banished from the land, they sought refuge upon the shores of Morocco, where they now constitute a large population, though they are held in the utmost contempt by the Moors.

During the morning we visited several interesting churches, hospitals, and convents, which afforded us much satisfaction; and in the afternoon walked out to the "Fabrica de las armas," the celebrated sword manufactory. This establishment is situated on the banks of the Tagus, at a distance of

Digitized by Google

nearly two miles from the city, and was at the period of our visit in the full tide of operation. The weapons here made are, it is well known, of extraordinary character, and are particularly remarkable for their elasticity and exquisite temper. Some specimens possess the former quality in so astonishing a degree, that they may be coiled up and packed in an exceedingly small compass, without experiencing any perceptible injury from the contortion, and so extremely hard are their points, that they may be powerfully dashed against a stone wall with impunity. The Toledo blades have had a wonderful fame from time immemorial, and I do not believe that those which are now constructed at the manufactory, are at all inferior to any which have been made in past years. Great care is taken in tempering the metal, for which the waters of the Tagus are supposed to possess peculiar virtues. The steel passes through an infinite number of gradual transitions, until it reaches its final stage of development, and the utmost caution is maintained in heating and cooling the metal. Carlos conducted us through every department of the establishment, and expatiated so learnedly upon the *modus operandi*, as not a little to surprise us at his rare intelligence. Thence we went into the *Armeria*, or show-room, where every variety of sword, pike, and battle-axe which had ever been in use in Spain, were collected and arranged in a tasteful manner. On leaving, we purchased a few daggers and rapiers, which we

Digitized by Google

carried away with us as interesting memorials of this memorable spot.

Returning to the city, we strolled for an hour along the fashionable *Alameda*, which was then quite thronged with a picturesque crowd. This afforded us an excellent opportunity of seeing the Toledan inhabitants, of which we were exceedingly desirous, before taking our departure from the city. They struck us as being a fine-looking race. The men were sedate and dignified in their bearing, and the women, though not so beautiful as those of Cadiz or Seville, were of noble forms, and animated with an expression of intelligence which I did not notice in any other part of the kingdom. Upon the Prado of Madrid, French bonnets and dresses are making sad inroads on the national costume, but upon the Alameda of Toledo all is original and characteristic of the Spanish race. By the way, the Parisian milliner is doing more towards undermining the old customs and romantic peculiarities of Spain, than anything else, and fashion is rapidly usurping the power which sovereign nature has wielded for so many years.

Carlos spent the evening with us in our apartment, and was very entertaining and agreeable. He had produced so favourable an impression upon us, that we were strongly tempted to take him with us as the constant companion of our wanderings. Upon the whole, however, we resolved to leave him to the soft blandishments of love, confident that

Digitized by Google

he could not long remain contented with us, while absent from the bright eyes and gentle influence of his charming Teresina.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER X.

OUR RETURN TO "THE HAPPY VALLEY OF THE CASTILES," AND JOURNEY FROM THENCE TO THE CITY OF SEVILLE.

We took the diligence in the morning for Aranjuez, leaving the time-honoured city of Toledo without any serious or unconquerable feelings of regret. My companion Ronalds declared it was the most dismal place he had ever seen, adding that he never wished to set foot in it again.

The road over which we passed was good, and continued its course along the basin of the Tagus, an occasional wretched Castilian hamlet alone intervening to break the monotony of the scene.

As we approached Aranjuez, the country became more pleasant and cheerful, while the highway was skirted with stately English elms, giving variety and beauty to the land scape. Arriving at the town, we put up at a comfortable hotel kept by an enterprising and plump-faced Englishman. Here we secured good quarters, and had a better dinner than

Digitized by Google

we had before enjoyed since our entry into Spain. A bottle of excellent ale which was put upon the table by our worthy and hospitable landlord, gave additional zest and piquancy to the well-cooked and substantial repast.

After we had despatched our dinner, a young man entered the room to ascertain if we should require his services in the morning to conduct us through the palace and royal grounds, at the same time assuring us in the most emphatic manner, that nothing equal to them existed in any part of the world. Though we knew this to be an exaggeration, yet we accepted the fellow's proposition, and directed him to come to us as soon as we should have finished breakfast, when we should be ready to accompany him. He was punctual to the minute, and had already procured the necessary orders from the authorities for us to visit the public edifices and gardens. The Palace, though a fine building, presents but slight claims to regal splendour, though several of its apartments are furnished with exceeding beauty and taste. It is occupied by the royal family during the spring months, at which time most of the nobility and the wealthy of the capital are here assembled, and the spot is said to present the most delightful effect imaginable.

In the height of the season, from twenty to thirty thousand persons are assembled at this place in quest of health, coolness, and rural enjoyment. The gardens are said to rival, and by some are even preferred to, those of La Granja. The fountains, though not so numerous, are equally elegant,

Digitized by Google

and are well supplied with the pure and gushing element, which is continually murmuring upon the ear, and distributing its flashing spray amid the spreading branches. The town is provided with a grand amphitheatre for the bull-fights, and also with a theatre. Ferdinand VII. established a telegraph between Aranjuez and the capital; perhaps more for the purpose of his own amusement than for any practical benefit which was likely to arise from it. According to the hand-book for travellers in Spain, the first message which the whimsical king sent to the grave council of Castile, was, "A nun has been brought to bed of twins;" to which the following reply was immediately returned: "Had it been a *monk*, that would have been *news!*"

Having seen everything that was deserving of notice in the town, we took a peregrination of a mile or two into the country, for the special purpose of visiting a beautiful sylvan palace called the Casa del Labrador. This was erected by Charles IV., and in its architecture and decorations is similar to the Escurial, which was likewise founded by the same monarch. Returning to our cozy quarters at the hotel, we spent a cheerful evening in social converse with our merry host. He had passed many years in Spain, but so far from having forgotten the green fields and happy firesides of Old England, he talked with patriotic enthusiasm of his early years, as a bright dream which the cares and vicissitudes of life had chased away. "Oh no," said he, "I have found out too late that there is no country so well adapted for an

Digitized by Google

Englishman to live in, as the country in which he was born."

At noon on the following day, we took the places we had previously engaged in the diligence for Seville, and with joyous expectations bade farewell to our worthy host of the "Quatro Naciones," and dashed at a rapid pace over the suspension-bridge of the Tagus, and out of the pleasant valley of Aranjuez. A lonely and tedious journey was before us, occupying in extent more than three hundred English miles. We were in glorious spirits, however, in view of the manifold delights of southern Spain. Orange groves, and palm trees, and Cadiz girls, filled our fancies with delicious images, and thoughts of the sweetest pleasures haunted each passing hour! Reminiscences of the past regaled the *present*, while the magnificent arch of the future expanded over our heads like a rainbow. Mr. Ronalds' travelling servant, a Frenchman, who had remained in Madrid for the express purpose of taking charge of our luggage, had fulfilled our instructions in regard to extra provisions, in order to obviate the possible inconvenience of starvation on the highway. On examining our larder, we found it contained an entire turkey, several loaves of bread and bottles of wine, and a mammoth sausage, of at least two feet in length by four inches in thickness.

We supped late in the evening at the town of Madridejos. Here we found a decent inn, and procured a cup of excellent chocolate. The country over which we had passed, possessed

Digitized by Google

but few features to interest us, and as a whole presented a most desolate and abandoned aspect. True, it was the depth of the winter season, and no signs of vegetation could be expected, yet the rocky gorges and untilled plains offered anything but a proof of agricultural prosperity to our eyes. The post-towns on our route were nothing better than wretched and impoverished villages, where we were completely beset by crowds of beggars, of both sexes and every age. Such marked destitution, amounting almost to nakedness and famine, excited our pity and surprise, and gave rise to a discussion between us, upon the corrupt policy of a government which tended to undermine national industry, and to entail such an universal state of misery upon the people. Give Spain education and a liberal government, and she will yet become one of the mightiest nations upon the earth. The Spaniards are naturally a noble race, while their character abounds in rich veins of precious metal, which, if properly acted upon by outward circumstances, would produce treasures of untold wealth. Ecclesiastical intolerance has stifled the growth of every virtue, and placed a tremendous barrier in the path of social progress. When this all-powerful obstacle is removed, the avenues of improvement and advancement will be opened to Spain, and then will she take that lofty and enviable position for which nature seems to have designed her, and to which she would have attained long years ago, but for the terrible evils and calamities that have befallen her.

Digitized by Google

Pursuing our journey, we reached Valdepenas in the morning, where we made a brief halt for breakfast. This place contains ten thousand inhabitants, though its inn is a horrible place for a man making any pretensions to civilization, to enter. It is small, uncleanly, dilapidated, and much more largely supplied with fleas than lodgers, the former, as a general rule, being remarkably endowed with powers of leaping, and seem to take particular delight in showing off their agility in the presence of strangers, whom they pounce upon as fearlessly as if they were capable of swallowing a human being at a mouthful!

The wine made at Valdepenas is excellent, and constitutes the common beverage in the northern parts of Spain. It is of a rich colour, and of an exceedingly agreeable, though pungent flavour. It is preserved in immense jars, and is transported into the different provinces by means of skins. From its abundance it is wonderfully cheap, and is as extensively drunk by the children of the poor, as by the most aristocratic grandees of the land. The town of Valdepenas is the heart of the district of La Mancha, which, with its endless plains and occasional windmills, stretches away monotonously in every direction. Four leagues from the town of Manzanares is the identical prison in which Cervantes composed and wrote the adventures of his hero, "Don Quixote." This work of genius has given an immortal celebrity and interest to the most unpicturesque and uninviting portion of Spain. The province contains nearly

Digitized by Google

eight thousand square miles, and consists almost entirely of elevated table-land, rising and falling in such easy undulations, as to present for the most part the appearance of a boundless and level plain, without verdure or trees of any description. The prospect is indescribably gloomy.

In the afternoon we rode through a splendid rocky pass, which, like a stupendous natural gateway, ushered us without preliminary into the magnificent country of Andalusia. This vast and delightful territory is subdivided into the four provinces of Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada, embracing an area of more than two thousand square leagues. The change in the scenery and climate was now very perceptible. The fields were greener, and the atmosphere more bland and mild. Everything gave assurance that we were entering a region of perpetual spring; a land where the cold blasts of winter were unknown. Rolling on, we arrived at the town of Baylen in the evening, where we stopped for supper, at a villanous-looking *parador*, or inn. We were not at all prepossessed with the aspect of the town, which had a most melancholy and disheartening look. A solitary palm tree, however, which we saw standing in the starlight, and waving its plume-like branches in the gentle breeze, aroused within me emotions of pleasure such as I had not experienced for years, and such as it would be impossible for me to express in words. It carried me back to those blissful days when, a youthful wanderer, without care or grief, I roamed along the luxuriant banks of the mighty Amazon,

Digitized by Google

and worshipped the Goddess of Nature at her most solemn altars and secret shrines! As we advanced on our jo we had become more and more excited, and consequ the hours lay heavier upon our hands.

But when the sun rose in Oriental splendour upon the ensuing morning, his refulgent beams fell upon a landscape of entrancing beauty. The desert had disappeared, and in its stead there bloomed around us an Eden of terrestrial loveliness, such as no painter could gaze upon without inspiration, or poet behold without delight.

In a few hours we entered the ancient and renowned city of Cordova, famous as the birth-place of Lucan and the two Senecas, and regarded by the Carthaginians as "the gem of the South." Espousing the cause of Pompey, this city was laid in ruin by Cæsar, who slaughtered, moreover, a large portion of its valiant inhabitants. Under the Moors it became distinguished for great wealth and refined civilization, and was considered by them a perfect heaven of terrestrial enjoyment. Its adjacent scenery is exceedingly beautiful, while the land is remarkable for fertility, and a considerable portion of it is under careful cultivation. The present city contains but fifty-five thousand inhabitants, and seems to be in a wretchedly poor and languishing condition. Viewing it as it now appears, the most credulous can scarcely realize the extravagant tales of its former prosperity and grandeur, when, having become the proud capital of the Arabian dominions in Spain, so early as the tenth century, it is said

Digitized by Google

to have contained nearly a million of inhabitants, and to have possessed three hundred mosques, six hundred inns, and nine hundred baths. It is deeply melancholy, reflecting upon this gorgeous picture of its former magnificence, to behold this interesting city thus fallen and degraded. It is a sad and eloquent commentary upon the pride and vanity of man, and the mutabilities and vicissitudes which are wrought in human affairs by the untiring march of hoary Time! The individual passes away and is forgotten, and even the splendid city in which he lived during the brief years of his earthly sojourn, becomes a cemetery and a ruin!

Passing the superb bridge of dark marble which spanned the Guadalquiver we rolled slowly through the narrow and crooked streets until we arrived at the post inn, where a temporary halt was made, in order to give the weary passengers an opportunity of appeasing their appetites, and deranging their stomachs with a hasty and half-masticated breakfast. While the others were enjoying their meal, we sallied out, after having swallowed merely a cup of chocolate, and proceeded with rapid steps towards the celebrated Moorish mosque, or *Mezquita*, which constitutes the prominent object of interest in Cordova, and justly deserves to be classed among the wonders of the world.

We had no sooner entered this extraordinary edifice, which externally has a stern, massive, and gloomy appearance, than we were surrounded by a swarm of importunate beggars, who assailed us with every species of lamentable

Digitized by Google

solicitation. Moved by their aspect of distress, we threw among them a handful of copper coin, which produced such a state of frightful discord and avaricious contention among them, that we were almost inclined to regret the charity we had bestowed, though the difficulty, however, arose from the manner in which we ourselves had distributed it.

Nothing could be more strange and striking in effect than the interior of this old Arabian mosque. The roof is low, and is supported by such a multiplicity of columns that it seemed to us at first as if we had entered a marble grove, or subterranean grotto of enchantment. Originally these pillars were twelve hundred in number, but many have been destroyed during periods of warfare, and consequently only about eight hundred and fifty now remain. These are composed of different kinds of marble, jasper, porphyry, and verd-antique: one hundred and forty of the original columns were presented by Leo, Emperor of Constantinople, and may easily be distinguished by their uniqueness and superior beauty. This mosque was built in the eighth century by the then reigning Arabian king, and was regarded as second only in rank and splendour to the Caaba of Mecca. The few moments allotted us merely allowed us to take a cursory glance at the various chapels and their curious decorations, yet the general effect left upon our mind was too gorgeous to be soon blotted from our memory. Resuming our journey, the city of Cordova gradually faded in the distance, while the retrospective view of the mountains

Digitized by Google

and fertile plains, the dashing river, the waving palms, and graceful olive hills, presented a scene of beauty which long lingered in our mental vision.

Soon after sunrise on the following morning we reached the picturesque town of Alcala, which is situated about two leagues from Seville, and is fortified with one of the most perfect and stately of all the Moorish castles now existing in Spain. At the base of the rocky hill, whose sloping side is ridged with ancient walls, the peaceful river makes a gentle curve, and courses merrily onward to the sea. Alcala is a town of bakers, and literally supplies Seville with bread, and that of the most excellent quality. The number of mills here in operation is above two hundred, while more than fifty ovens are said to be in constant use. Besides bread, the city of Seville derives its water from Alcala, which is conveyed from thence by means of a modern Spanish aqueduct.

We were now at the termination of our protracted journey, and delightful indeed to a couple of exhausted wanderers was the prospect of repose in such a charming region. Ronalds was in ecstacies, and smoked his cigar with all the tranquil complacency of a contented Turk.

At length the much wished for spectacle dawned upon our sight. In the centre of the delicious plain beneath us and upon the verdant banks of the sparkling Guadalquivir, lay the enchanting city of Seville, with its grand cathedral rising in gothic sublimity to the sky, and pointing, as it

Digitized by Google

were, with its filigree fingers, to the spirit's everlasting home. As we approached nearer, the roadside became skirted with beautiful gardens and orange-groves in fruitful bloom, enclosed with hedges of prickly cactus and wild geraniums in fragrant flower. In contrast with the barren Castiles, from which our transition had been so sudden, it seemed as if we were now within the precincts of Paradise itself. Nor did we experience anything like disappointment upon entering the gates of the city. On the contrary, the general appearance of the streets and houses gave us the utmost pleasure, to which was added the heartfelt satisfaction of having completed our long, and, upon the whole, uninteresting journey. We betook ourselves at once to the "Fonda de Europa," where we secured more agreeable accommodations than we had previously met with in the country. An excellent dinner was immediately provided for us, during the private enjoyment of which a poor blind fiddler, called Chico, was brought into the room for our entertainment, who not only played with consummate skill upon the instrument, but likewise sang for us several of the popular songs of Andalusia in a manner which called forth from us a perfect round of applause. Our bowels of compassion were highly moved; and, moreover, so much were we amused with the musical performances of the old man, that we made him promise to visit us every day during our stay in Seville, a promise which we found not the slightest difficulty in exacting, and which, to the very letter, was scrupulously fulfilled.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

AN EPITOME OF SEVILLIAN HISTORY, WITH BRIEF NOTICES OF THE CATHEDRAL AND EXCHANGE.

Of all the cities in Spain, Seville undoubtedly presents the largest share of attractions. Its origin and early history are involved in deep obscurity. The Sevillians themselves attribute the foundation of their city to Hercules, as do also the natives of Toledo and the inhabitants of several other Spanish towns. The probability is, that it was quite an insignificant Punic town previous to its conquest by Julius Cæsar, who very much improved it, and finally converted it into a capital. It afterwards fell into the hands of the Goths, under whom it continued to be the seat of regal power until the removal of the capital, in the sixth century, to Toledo. Upon the defeat of Don Roderick, and the consequent overthrow of the Gothic dominion, Seville was taken by the Moors, and remained in their possession until the year 1248,

Digitized by Google

when, after a vain and desperate conflict, it surrendered to Ferdinand, the valiant king of the united powers of Leon and Castile. At this time the Arabian dynasty had become shattered, and the different kingdoms were engaged in civil warfare with each other. Certain tribes, through hatred and jealousy, even afforded assistance to the Christian monarch against their envied brethren, and thus ensured to his armies that success which otherwise would never have attended his chivalrous efforts. A few years after the siege, Ferdinand died in the city he had captured, and in the year 1668 he was constituted a saint by the act of Clement IX. Seville continued to be the capital of Spain until the court was transferred to Valladolid, during the eventful reign of Charles V.

Such is a brief epitome of the history of a city which has been successively a capital under four distinct nations, and which combines in its present aspect striking peculiarities and interesting vestiges of each.

Before commencing our excursions through the city, we engaged an eccentric person of the Name of Pascual Rose to act as our guide. This man, though a native of Gibraltar, had resided many years in Seville, and had earned a livelihood principally by waiting upon strangers and showing them the marvels and curiosities of the place. Another source of emolument was the fees and commissions which he was accustomed to exact from every shopkeeper to whom he introduced a customer. This is a practice which prevails

Digitized by Google

extensively among the valets of Spain; the traveller, therefore, cannot be too much on his guard against deception and roguery. In order to prevent actual loss, the commission of the guide is added to the original price of the article. On this account, if you have a sufficient knowledge of the language, you should always make your purchases alone, offering about half the price demanded, which is often sufficient, and can always be compromised for a third. Foreigners are invariably charged more than natives: they are expected to have long purses, and are unscrupulously taxed for accordingly. Though our conductor, Pascual, was by no means perfect, but on the contrary was full of faults and imperfections, yet he made himself extremely useful to us as a companion, and afforded us an infinite deal of amusement by his drolleries and laughable eccentricities. Such a perfect volume of rhapsodical talk I never heard issue from a human gullet before—it was truly overwhelming. Being a "rock-scorpion," his knowledge of the English language was extremely imperfect, as well as ungrammatical, though we had no difficulty in understanding him, in spite of the rapidity with which he mangled the innocent words of the noble Anglo-Saxon tongue. This fellow had introduced himself to us immediately upon our arrival, and with many extravagant commendations of his own qualifications, had solicited the honour of taking us under his charge during our stay in the city, at the same time promising with ludicrous energy to devote himself, body and soul, to our

Digitized by Google

service. There was something about the clown that pleased us, so we took him forthwith upon his own recommendation.

The first great object which we visited in Seville was the cathedral. This is, without exception, the most magnificent ecclesiastical edifice in Spain, and probably the most solemn and religiously-impressive one in the world. It contains grandeur with simplicity, and symmetry of form with elegance of finish and beauty of design; its architecture is a combination of the Gothic, the Roman, and the Moorish styles, the former of which, however, strongly predominates. Here one reads, in the very marble and unchanging granite, the history of departed ages, and the vast changes which have been wrought by passing centuries. Nations have flourished and vanished while this mighty temple, which witnessed their rise, their progress, and their fall, stands as firm as the eternal rocks, looking upwards in glorious triumph to heaven. The original Moorish mosque which occupied the site of the present cathedral was totally demolished, with the exception of its wonderful tower, the *Giralda*, which is not only perfect and unimpaired, as in the days of its Arabian pride, but has, moreover, one hundred feet of additional height, which is now about three hundred and fifty feet. This tower was erected during the twelfth century, and has been the theme of admiration to all artists and travellers who have beheld it. It was from this tower that the *muezzin* was accustomed to call the faithful to prayers, but the Arabian star has now

Digitized by Google

for ever set, and the dusky Moor no longer bends the knee in Spain.

The surface of the tower is covered with curious Oriental devices and delicate stucco tracery: the effect is beautiful in the extreme. Upon the pinnacle is a bronze female figure representing Faith: it is fourteen feet in height, and weighs nearly three thousand pounds. The view from the belfry of the city and surrounding country, the green meadows and olive-dotted hills, the winding river, luxuriant orange-groves and snow-white houses, as well as the numerous domes and sun-lit spires of the city itself, presented to our eyes a panorama of unrivalled interest and beauty. The ascent of the tower is made by a series of sloping planes, the inclination of which is so gradual that a person might ride to the belfry on horseback, if he were disposed for such a novel equestrian undertaking.

At the entrance of the Giralda was a little room where a pretty gipsy girl sat from morning till night upon a low seat near the door, engaged in working beautiful baskets of varicoloured beads which she disposed of to strangers, as pleasing mementos of their visit to the cathedral. We had not the heart to pass the threshold without contributing our mite of encouragement to the damsel, who, though she belonged to the gipsy race, had a brightness of eye and a softness of manner which irresistibly won from us a tribute of praise. Our guide, Pascual, appeared to be intimately acquainted

Digitized by Google

with the maiden, and made himself so very free with her that she would have served him right had she smartly boxed his ears for his insolence.

The gipsy girl of the Giralda spoke the Spanish remarkably well, and the tones of her voice were gentle and kind; yet there was an artful and sinister expression about her features which gave one, at a glance, the most positive assurauce of the strange tribe to which she belonged. She told us that she danced regularly at one of the theatres, and, upon the request of the loquacious Pascual showed us several of her gala dresses, which were indeed quite fantastic and gay.

Adjoining the base of the town is the "Patio de las Naranjas," or court of orange trees. This is neatly paved, and has an old fountain in the centre, at which the Moors formerly performed their pious ablutions. The northern entrance is very fine, being spanned with an oriental horse-shoe arch, and furnished with massive doors of bronze. Upon entering the cathedral we were instantly impressed with the vastness and sublimity of the sacred edifice:—an unutterable stillness filled the place, while a dim and solemn light from the richly stained glass of the grand gothic windows, gave tone and spirit to the holy grandeur of the scene. No human object crossed our vision, save an occasional black-robed priest, stealing with noiseless steps and phantom aspect from one dark cloister to another. I felt that I was within the walls of an edifice exclusively set apart for the worship of

Digitized by Google

that unseen and dread Being, who has created all things and exercises over them a controlling and resistless influence. Unworthy thoughts fled from my mind, while springs of deep reflection started into action within the secret recesses of my soul.

I have visited many of the grandest cathedrals and churches of Europe, but not one of them, not even St. Peter's at Rome, nor the magnificent Duomo of Milan, gave me so powerful an impression of solemnity and awe, as I experienced upon entering the stupendous cathedral of Seville. Its length is four hundred and thirty-one feet, and its width three hundred and fifteen. It has five aisles, exclusive of the line of lateral chapels, the space occupied by which would constitute two more. Nothing could be more striking than the central nave, whose height is one hundred and forty-five feet, while at the transept dome it is increased to one hundred and seventy. The floor consists of a chequered pavement of black and white marble, which has a most beautiful effect, and was constructed at an immense expense.

About the centre of the royal aisle is the *coro*, or place for the singers :—this is composed externally of the finest marbles of different colors, polished and carved in the most exquisite manner. On each side the splendid and richly gilt organs rise almost to the very ceiling; though perhaps they are too profusely covered with ornaments and superfluous decorations, yet they are mighty instruments, and send forth tones at times as terrible as the rolling thunder, and then again as

Digitized by Google

soft as the chiming of evening bells, and as sweet as the voices of happy birds. According to Mr. Ford, author of the "Handbook of Spain," the largest of the organs, which was made in the year 1792, is said to have five thousand three hundred pipes, and one hundred and ten stops more than the one of Haarlem.

But it is in vain for one to attempt detail in regard to the Seville cathedral, unless perchance he contemplate writing an entire book upon the subject, for which its innumerable wonders of art afford ample materials. The contents of any one of the cloisters alone would abundantly supply thought and matter for an essay. Though wanting in fine sculpture, yet it contains inestimable treasures of exquisite painting, by Murillo and other distinguished masters of the Spanish school. Not a day passed by that we did not spend at least an hour in wandering through the various cloisters, and up and down the long and solemn aisles, gazing at the mysteries and marvels of the tremendous edifice, and listening to the overwhelming sounds of the glorious organs, as they rolled and reverberated among the gigantic columns and gothic arches of this most stately temple of the great and living God.

In every part of the cathedral we noticed printed cards, expressly forbidding the sexes to walk or talk together within the walls of the edifice, threatening with excommunication all such as should disregard this sacred injunction.

On leaving the cathedral we were conducted by the merry Pascual to the Lonja or Exchange. This noble edifice was

Digitized by Google

erected during the reign of Philip II., and is constructed of solid granite, brought from the quarries near Xerez. Within is the spacious patio, or court, where, in the days of Sevillian prosperity, the commercial men of the city gathered themselves together for the transaction of general business, the making of contracts, and speculations on the rise and fall of stocks. It is difficult to restrain a feeling of melancholy upon entering that lonely and grass-grown court, once so noisy with the busy hum of traffic and the sharp bickerings of avaricious men, now so silent, so deserted, and so sad. Even my unsentimental friend Ronalds looked grim, though our guide maintained the same expression of merriment that characterized on all occasions his comical features. "Come," said he, with a good-natured smile, "and you shall see some writings that will make you stare."

We thereupon ascended a royal flight of marble steps, handsomely embellished with jasper ornaments, which led us to an upper chamber, in which were collected the deeply interesting archives, relating to the discovery and early settlement of America. These valuable relics are arranged in massive cases of mahogany, and constitute an extensive as well as invaluable library in themselves. The amount of manuscript is enormous, and gives one an adequate idea of the enthusiasm which must have marked the characters of the immortal discoverers of the new world. No one can gaze upon the handwriting of such men as Columbus, Pizarro, and Cortes, and read the details of the wonderful vicissitudes

Digitized by Google

and strange adventures which they encountered, during their wanderings in the newly discovered land beyond the sea, without reflecting upon the extraordinary—I may almost say miraculous—results which have sprung from the labors of these men; who may be said to have followed the guidance of the mighty sun, and scattered the seeds of civilization amid the old and boundless forests of the western world.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XII.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE ALCAZAR, AND TOBACCO FACTORY OF SEVILLE—AN INTERESTING RELIC OF THE HOLY INQUISITION—DELIGHTFUL STROLL UPON THE GUADALQUIVER.

"We will now," said Pascual, "go to the Alcazar. I know that building well, and had the honor of residing in it more than a year, as the head cook of her sweet ladyship, the Duchess de Montpensier. Those were happy, happy times, good wages, good living, and excellent wine. The Duchess was particularly fond of me, and made me many a fine present, on account of the extraordinary tact and skill I displayed in suiting my dishes to the delicate palate of her Highness."

"Well! upon my word," replied Ronalds, with an extraordinary look of disbelief, "I never should have taken you for a cook, and really I believe you lie! How the devil did you ever learn anything about cookery?"

"By the thousand witches," exclaimed Pascual, in a burst

Digitized by Google

of virtuous indignation, "you will never doubt my cooking capacities, after you have once given me a fair trial. Good heavens! I have the reputation of being the best cook in Seville, and would bet you a million of dollars, by all the saints, that you cannot find a man anywhere who will prepare a boned turkey equal to myself, or make a better plum-pudding."

"If that is absolutely the case," said Ronalds, "you shall superintend our cookery for the future, and if anything is permitted to go into our mouths which is in the least degree unsavoury, or intended as an experiment upon our digestive powers, you may depend upon a just retribution for your egotistical exaggeration of your own culinary qualifications."

We had now arrived at the Alcazar, and were standing before its grand Moorish portal, which was built by Don Pedro in the fourteenth century, when he restored this dilapidated palace, employing Moorish workmen for the purpose. Here the marriage of Charles V. to Isabella of Portugal took place, and here Philip V. spent two years of solitary retirement, in a morbid condition of religious fanaticism and in the quiet enjoyment of a self-imposed monastic life.

On entering, we could scarcely dispossess our minds of a strange feeling like that of enchantment, which came suddenly upon us. It seemed as if, like a couple of modern Aladdins, we had, by some magical influence, been translated into the midst of a fairy palace. All was still and motionless! The gentle trickling of water from the fountains

Digitized by Google

in the gardens, and the echoes of our own footsteps and voices, which followed us through lordly halls, vaulted passages, and deserted corridors, were the only sounds which fell upon our ears. It would be no easy task to give one an adequate idea of the peculiar beauty of this ancient palace of the Moors, which, with the exception of the Alhambra, is decidedly the most remarkable in Spain. The original decorations of its halls, including the Arabesque tracery of the wall and the rich and vari-tinted hues of the ceiling, have been in a great measure impaired by the depravity of modern taste, which has even covered, and almost erased, the exquisite stucco work and architectural embroidery of some of the apartments by daubing it over with a thick coating of whitewashing. How men could be so utterly lost to a sense of taste and beauty, is exceedingly difficult to conceive.

The Hall of Ambassadors is a magnificent audience chamber, with a lofty and gorgeously decorated dome-swelling roof. Here many a Moslem banquet has probably been held, and many a Moorish pontiff been received in royal state. The adjacent patio is seventy feet in length by fifty-four in breadth. It is surrounded by columns and filigree arches, and has in the centre a fountain of pure and ever-bubbling water. In a chamber near the grand hall, it is said that Don Fabrique, master of Santiago, was cruelly murdered by his half-brother Don Pedro, properly surnamed "the Cruel," who, with the intention of carrying out this unnatural and diabolical project, had hypocritically invited him to a royal

Digitized by Google

entertainment. Several red spots in the white marble pavement were pointed out to us by the credulous Pascual, who firmly believed them to have been caused by the blood of the unfortunate Don Fabrique. Those, however, of more incredulity, are said to have serious doubts on this point. As to Ronalds, he laughed heartily at the bare idea.

We walked into the gardens, and spent an hour in strolling about its winding and pleasant walks. In the midst of these charming grounds is an artificial pond, filled with glittering fish, though whether they are the veritable descendants of those placed here by Philip V., I cannot exactly say. Pascual insisted upon it that they were, though Ronalds contradicted him stoutly, and, moreover, added that it was too great an absurdity to be thought of for a moment.

The gardens were tastefully laid out, and in delightful bloom, and the air was truly fragrant with the incense of the numerous blossoms and flowers. The orange-trees were heavily laden with fruit, the sweetest and spiciest that ever cooled a human tougue. At our desire Pascual climbed one of the trees, and gave us an opportunity of filling our pockets, which we literally crammed to their utmost distension, with the golden-cheeked oranges, which fell in their ripeness with the most gentle agitation of the branches.

Beneath the palace is a subterranean cavern, which we entered from the garden called "the Bath of Maria de Padilla." On one side of the long marble basin, were several grated cells, in one of which, we were assured by Pascual, Blanche

Digitized by Google

of Bourbon, the innocent wife of Philip the Cruel, was imprisoned, and compelled to witness the daily ablutions of her husband, with the powerful rival who had supplanted her in his affections. What spectacle could be more agonizing to an affectionate and tender wife than this? To what lower grade could human cruelty descend! It is probable, however, that this story, like many others of a similar nature, is but an exaggeration, to which the credulity of the multitude has given birth.

From the Alcazar we directed our steps to the *Casa de Pilatos*, or House of Pilate. This splendid mansion was built at the close of the fifteenth century, and presents a singular intermixture of the Gothic and Arabian styles. It is in a lamentably abandoned and ruinous state, though its proprietor is a man of high rank and extensive wealth. Its Moorish patio is sixty feet square, around which is a grove of delicate white columns supporting a series of exquisite Arabian arches, elaborately embellished with filigree inscriptions and beautiful lace-like workmanship in stucco. Many of the rooms are pencilled in the same curious manner, while the lower parts of the walls are covered with the painted porcelain tiles, in general use to this day among the Moors, and which give such a strikingly neat and pleasing effect to the interior of their dwellings. Numerous specimens of ancient statuary are scattered among the courts and chambers, but none of them merit any degree of attention, save for their antiquity. They were brought from the ruins of Italica, and have very

Digitized by Google

much degenerated from their original condition. I doubt whether there is a single statue among the entire number which is not minus a head, an arm, or a leg, or at least an ear or a nose, or some other equally important part of the animal economy.

Our next visit was to the *Fabrica de Tabacos*, or tobacco factory. This is the most immense establishment of the kind in Spain, and is devoted exclusively to the manufacture of snuff and cigars. "Chewing" is a habit to which the Spaniards are not addicted. Tobacco, being a government monopoly, yields an enormous revenue to the crown; the factories being the most extensive in the world, and the demand for the weed even greater than the supply. The Fabrica of Seville, though utterly devoid of architectural merit, is only surpassed in size by the famous monastery of the Escurial. It is six hundred and sixty-two feet in length, by five hundred and twenty-four in width: having been erected by a fat Dutchman about the middle of the last century, its slight claims to symmetry and elegance are in no degree to be wondered at. Its substantiality, however, and excellent adaptation to the purposes for which it was intended, render it well worthy of a careful examination, either by the fastidious cigar smoker or indefatigable snuff taker. For the edification of such in particular have we undertaken this brief description of the edifice.

Within its walls it has twenty-eight courts, while externally the building is encompassed by a deep moat, in

Digitized by Google

order to guard against the possibility of smuggling on the part of the operatives. The number of persons usually employed, ranges from five to six thousand, though several thousand additional hands are sometimes called into requisition in years of extraordinary demand. By far the greater proportion of these are females, perhaps even four-fifths. Our application for admission was readily granted, and such was the politeness of the managers, that they put us immediately under the charge of a young Spaniard connected with the building, with instructions to him to show us every part of the establishment which we might desire to see. This mission he performed to our entire satisfaction. We soon dispatched the snuff department, which occupies the ground floor, and which gave us such a terrible fit of sneezing, that we were somewhat fearful our nasal organs would never recover from the severe shock they had experienced. None but males were employed in the snuff rooms, and more wretched-looking objects I think I never saw.

They were frightfully cadaverous and pale, and afforded palpable proofs of the pernicious influence of such a poisoned and tobacco-impregnated atmosphere upon their constitutions. Ascending to the upper story, we entered an immense hall, running nearly the whole length of the building, in which between three and four thousand females, seated at tables, were busily engaged in the manufacture of cigars. It was indeed a strange spectacle. Not a man

Digitized by Google

was to be seen among the enormous concourse, and even had there been half a dozen, well might we have exclaimed, "What are these among so many?" The females were of every age, from childhood upwards, and, as a general rule, their complexions were characterized by a sallow and unhealthy look. The animation which prevailed among them, on our sudden advent, was perfectly overwhelming: such a din and clattering of voices was absolutely deafening. Every mouth was in rapid motion, and quite rivalled in its vibrations the meteoric movements of their hands. *We* were evidently the engrossing subject of conversation, and our vanity was consequently on the alert to overhear some of the remarks that were made, and thus discover what impression our appearance had caused upon the thickly-clustered damsels around us. But to our great dismay, we heard but little of a complimentary nature, which aroused our indignation to such a height, that we were half inclined to make a terrific charge amid the mighty throng, and seek revenge by kissing in turn each beautiful culprit upon whom we could lay our hands! But seriously, we saw very little beauty among them, which we attributed in a great measure to the unwholesome nature of their occupation. Certainly I never saw such a striking want of good looks among any other class in Spain. In Seville these girls are termed *cigarreras*, and do not enjoy a very enviable reputation.

We were not sorry to get out of the tobacco factory into the pure and transparent atmosphere once more. In the

Digitized by Google

neighbourhood and upon the adjacent plain, Pascual pointed out to us the remains of the *Quemadero*, a kind of altar, upon which, in former times, the victims of the Holy Inquisition were destroyed by fire. This awful tribunal was established at Seville in the year 1481, and continued in existence until the year 1808, during which period nearly thirty-five thousand persons had been burnt alive by its mandates. The memory of this tremendous engine of human power exercises an important influence over the Spanish people, and they still have lingering fears that it may again be revived. A Spaniard seldom speaks of the Inquisition, and when he does, it is with a manifest feeling of intense horror and fear. Even Pascual shuddered and looked solemn while showing us the impressive spot, upon which so many innocent beings had died in torment and been speedily reduced to ashes by the flaming embers around them. We quickly withdrew from a place so calculated by its associations to disturb the serenity of our minds, and hastened to take a stroll through the delightful grounds of the *Delicias*.

These grounds are situated along the banks of the river, and are laid out with much taste and elegance, having several avenues forming complete arbours of orange trees, and terminating at length in a labyrinthine garden, containing an extensive variety of the most beautiful plants and flowers, and intersected with an infinite number of winding paths, running like serpents in every possible direction. It

Digitized by Google

is as sweet a place as one could wish to lose himself in on a summer's day, or where he would like to wander at eve, in company with the maid whom his heart loved best! A soft fragrance fills the tender air, and anon sweet strains of delicious melody come floating on the enchanted breeze. Everything seems conducive to quiet reverie and repose. The stars shine calmly in the undimmed sky. Insects chirp in the dewy grass, and evening birds chant songs of joy, amid the drooping foliage of the trees. The quiet is deep, and in the solemn stillness the better feelings of the soul steal from their chambers and fill again the bosom with the childish rapture of one's early days—days when the waters of the heart were crystal pure, and the gentle delights of innocence were the only joys our pristine nature ever knew.

The sun was setting, when we turned to leave the beauty-haunted banks of the murmuring Guadalquiver. The west was all a-glow with radiant splendour. In the distance and upon the opposite side of the stream, a single delicate palm-tree stood boldly relieved in the golden light. Fine equipages and cavaliers on handsome steeds, were dashing up and down the shady promenade, while damsels innumerable, in gay dresses and dark mantillas, flitted by us like the ethereal creations of a dream! This was our last impression, as we slowly wended our way through the narrow and crooked lanes of the city and sought repose after the fatigues of the day in the quiet retirement of our hotel.

Digitized by Google

But our restless Pascual would not allow us long to remain undisturbed, and in fact persuaded us, as soon as the proper hour had arrived, to sally out, exhausted as we were, and spend the evening at an adjacent theatre. Fortunately, the play was a comedy, and we were considerably entertained. As to Spanish tragedies, they are generally stupid in character and of deplorable length, while the stiffness and unnatural manner of the actors in the execution of their several parts, impair in a great measure the interest of the composition, and destroy completely the effect of the catastrophe. Spain is not the country to behold correct dramatic representations of human misfortune and sorrow. Real tragedies are every day enacted around you, and oftentimes before your very eyes. There are the scenes which rouse your soul from its torpor, and such as these constitute the actual drama of Spain. The successful counterfeit of grief you must not expect to see, but blasted love in the agonies of despair, and burning tears upon the scalding brow, and crimson gore upon the bleeding breast,—these will appear before you at every step, and your heart will not be mocked by the semblance, but will be softened by the painful reality of distress.

But though the Spanish theatre has thus degenerated and fallen into decay, yet during the reign and patronage of Philip IV. it attained the highest honours, and promised to become the most perfect and influential in the European world. At present, it excels only in the performance of

Digitized by Google

farces and low comedies, which are unquestionably more laughable and amusing, (to one who has an adequate knowledge of the Spanish language) than any similar spectacles to be seen elsewhere. They abound in mirth, intrigue, wit, and cutting satire, and are admirably adapted for putting a man in better humour with himself and exciting a friendly sentiment towards humanity in general. Spaniards appear to one who is unacquainted with their real character, in the disguise of solemn dignity and serious deportment, but beneath this veil there exists an exhaustless fund of genuine humour, which no gravity can withstand, or vicissitudes of life destroy.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BUILDINGS OF SEVILLE—THE TERTULIA AND SPANISH ETIQUETTE — PICTURES OF MURILLO —"BARABBAS" AND THE PRETTY SASH-MAKER—A NOVEL AUCTION SCENE—SHAVING OPERATION — A PEEP AT THE DANCES AND DANCERS OF SEVILLE.

THOUGH the city of Seville does not present so grand and imposing an effect as Madrid and several other Spanish towns, yet it never fails to leave a more pleasing impression upon the mind of the traveller, who in general takes his departure from it with a lingering feeling of reluctance and a strange and vague longing that he may at some future period be permitted to return. The city is better adapted, in every respect, for a prolonged residence, than any other in the country; while to the mere visitor, it offers a greater variety of attractions and amusements, than are to be found concentrated in any other spot of the Peninsula. Every

Digitized by Google

species of vegetable and fruit is produced in its vicinity, and the climate, especially during the spring and autumn, is bland and genial, and odorous with the sweet fragrance of the orange and the rose.

The houses are for the most part rather low, and built in the ancient Moorish style. They are built of stone and are covered externally with a heavy coating of whitewash. Though but little decorated externally, many of them are most sumptuously furnished within. In the manner of the Arabians, every dwelling is quadrangular and encloses a small *patio* or court, which is surrounded by galleries, and is entirely open to the sky. Nothing can be more beautiful than this scene, as witnessed by a person walking through the street and suddenly disclosed to his eye through the iron gateway. The floor of the patio consists of small porcelain blocks, painted in a style much in favor among the Moors. In the centre is a marble fountain, gently distributing its waters in a silvery shower, among a group of orange and lemon trees, by which it is encircled. On either side, are columns and arches, supporting the colonnades of the edifice and affording strength to the superstructure. Doors open into this patio as into a drawing-room, and during the summer evenings it is quite customary for the family to hold their tertulias here, and while away the hours with the merry dance and song.

At these tertulias, the most unrestrained cordiality prevails. If you have been once welcomed to the house of a Spaniard,

Digitized by Google

you are ever after at liberty to attend his weekly receptions, and may always depend upon passing an easy and agreeable evening. It is incumbent upon you, as a matter of etiquette, not to allow a fortnight to pass, without attending the tertulia of any family whose good opinion you wish to preserve. A marked neglect in this respect will not fail to be regarded as a serious breach of politeness, by the lady whose hospitality you have slighted, and in case a ball is subsequently given by her, she will be particular not to extend an invitation to yourself. But though you are expected occasionally to make your appearance at the tertulia, the length of your visit depends altogether upon your own discretion. You may leave if you please, immediately after having paid your respects to the heads of the family, and your departure will not be considered in the slightest degree extraordinary or improper. It is not necessary for you to plead an engagement or offer a reason of any kind. It is presumed that you have something on hand, which you wish to perform, whose nature is immaterial to them, and into which they have not the least disposition to inquire. Such being the custom, one can maintain a very large acquaintance, without putting himself to any extraordinary inconvenience.

The Spaniards indeed are a suspicious and reserved people in their conduct towards strangers on a first acquaintance, but their hospitality is genuine and generous, and when you have once proved yourself worthy of their confidence, they will freely unfold to you every minute circumstance

Digitized by Google

connected with their past life and future plans. Remove, or let them remove, the mask which conceals their real features from view, and you will behold in their character much to admire and esteem. If you would have them cordial in their manner towards yourself, you must begin by manifesting a cordiality towards them. Please their vanity, and they will speedily become your friends. Wound their pride, and all fellowship henceforth is at an end —you have planted a thorn within their bosoms, which will rankle for ever.

The position of Seville is upon the eastern bank of the Guadalquiver, which makes a semicircular sweep about it. The city contains nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants, and is encompassed by Moorish walls in good preservation, which have fifteen gates, and are surmounted by sixty-six towers. The neighbouring country is well supplied with game, which attracts thither many sportsmen both from Cadiz and Gibraltar. The population comprises many gipsies, which mysterious race are principally collected together in the suburb of Triana, on the opposite side of the river. There, likewise, smugglers and every species of vagabond abound. The ancient quarter of the Jews, called "La Juderia," should certainly be visited, if for no other purpose than to see the house of Murillo, which is there situated. The very room in which this immortal artist painted many of his finest works is still shown to the curious stranger. The church in which he was entombed was

Digitized by Google

destroyed by the French, and his ashes were lost or scattered amid the general ruin.

The most wonderful pictures of this illustrious artist are contained in the Museo and the Hospital de la Caridad, or house of alms for decrepid old men. In the latter establishment are six splendid works: the two principal ones are of colossal size, and of the most exquisite finish. One of these represents the "Distribution of the loaves and fishes," and the other that of "Moses smiting the rock in the wilderness," and really the living water seems almost to gush from out the canvas. The works of Murillo are indescribably powerful, and are of so beautiful and divine a nature that even the most untutored cannot but be conscious of their refining influence and beauty. They speak volumes to the heart of every beholder, and with an eloquence subtle and irresistible. In the Museo are eighteen pieces by this extraordinary master, each of them unique both in design and execution. These are by themselves, in a separate room, forming a cabinet, to which art might search the world in vain to find a parallel, so marvellous are they, so perfect, and so beautiful.

It must not be supposed that we confined our attention during our stay at Seville merely to the antiquities and modern works of art contained in that interesting city; on the contrary, we bestowed no small portion of our time in visiting the different factories and utilitarian institutions of every kind, for the express purpose of making ourselves

Digitized by Google

acquainted with the channels of national industry, and of acquiring a familiarity with the different character of the labouring people. The conclusion to which our investigations brought us, was one that reflects high honour upon the noble peasantry of Spain: they are a generous, honest, and magnanimous race, who are useful members of the human family, and consequently deserve to be classed among the real nobility of earth. In truth, they excited within my breast a far greater degree of admiration than the titled grandees of the land, whose want of intelligence in many instances was not only astonishing, but contemptible.

Of the many establishments we visited, a certain manufactory of silk sashes holds a marked place in our recollection, the reason of which will become manifest before we have made much additional progress in our narrative. The proprietor of the factory was a venerable Moor, arrayed in the rich and flowing costume of his forefathers, while his capacious head was encompassed by a clean and snowy turban, which displayed to great advantage his benevolent and fine-looking countenance. This old fellow rejoiced in the disreputable name of Barabbas, but in spite of this villainous appellation he soon prepossessed us, by his kind attention, strongly in his favour. Conducting us patiently through every department of the building, he politely explained everything to us in the most satisfactory manner, and seemed very much to enjoy the emotions of surprise and pleasure which we so strikingly manifested. "Now," said he, after

Digitized by Google

having exhausted every other source of entertainment, "now I will show you as beautiful a girl as ever won the heart of man; and I know you foreigners are quite partial to the bright eyes of the lovely Spanish maids." Thus saying, he took us into an apartment where a number of female operatives were engaged at their work. "There," said he, pointing to one of the damsels whom he addressed by the expressive and tender title of *Nina* (child), "that is the girl of whom I spoke; tell me what you think of her? She is the prettiest maid in all Seville, and yet she is as innocent as an infant at its mother's breast. Is she not the most beautiful creature you ever saw?"

We were rather surprised at the enthusiastic warmth of the old Moor, but agreed with him entirely in regard to the opinion he had expressed relative to the charms of the lovely girl before us. Her face was exquisitely beautiful: her soft but refulgent blue eyes, so rarely seen in Spain, beamed forth the flashes of a pure and glorious soul. Her complexion was remarkably fair; her face was rather small, but of an exquisitely turned oval.

A droll controversy between Pascual and Ronalds upon the comparative merits of women, and the rank to which they were entitled in the scale of creation, afforded me much entertainment as we strolled through the streets together after having made our exit from the interesting factory of Barabbas. Pascual, who was a married man, and in all probability a hen-pecked husband, declared that women had

Digitized by Google

been very much overrated, and that he did not consider them such great blessings as thay were generally supposed to be. "Women," continued he, "are the ruination of mankind, and they deserve to be punished to the end of time for the fool ish infatuation of grandmother Eve, whose insatiable curiosity, which drove her and Adam out of Eden, has been bequeathed with interest to their posterity. Master Ronalds, I beg of you never to think of marriage, for, upon my life, though I love my wife as much as is reasonable, yet I have wished many a day that I was a free and happy bachelor again!"

"What the deuce did you marry for, you discontented jackanapes? It would be a good plan for you to hang yourself. I'll show you how to tie a hangman's knot, and will advance you a sufficient sum to enable you to purchase a halter."

Thus spoke these two erudite philosophers, until suddenly an end was put to their debate (which, by-the-bye, was getting somewhat noisy and obstreperous) by our arrival at an auction store, into which, by way of variety, I proposed that we should enter. The sale was conducted in the open court, around which were a number of benches, upon which were quietly seated some forty or fifty grim-looking individuals, as silent and motionlessas if they were so many mourners at a funeral. The auctioneer, of an ill-omened visage, was mounted upon a low platform in front of his auditory to whom he declared in calm and measured words the

Digitized by Google

article which was for sale, as well as the highest price which had already been bid upon it.

On the whole it was a serious and impressive ceremony. The stillness was scarcely broken by a word or a whisper, and when the bell was rung at the close of each sale, it was like the tolling of a death knell. When we left the spot it was with faces as long as if we had just emerged from a sepulchre.

Passing through the fruit market, we could not resist the temptation to stop and refresh ourselves with a few of the luscious oranges which, in huge piles and numberless basketfuls, were sparkling like gold in the warm sunshine. We purchased as many as we wished at the rate of eight for a half-penny, and while we were talking of their cheapness, a poor fellow in rags hobbled up to us and begged of us a penny, for which he offered full twenty beautiful oranges! We were touched, and forthwith gave the wretched creature double what he had demanded, though we refused to take from him any fruit in return. But the reader will not be disposed to give us much credit for charity when I tell him that our pockets were already full to overflowing.

Before returning to our hotel we stopped at a barber's shop to get shaved. According to legendary report and general belief, this was the identical one occupied by the immortal Figaro of Beaumarchais, Mozart, and Rossini. Such being its associations, who could resist the temptation to pop into it? The barber we found to be a young and

Digitized by Google

skilful artist in his profession, who gave us a most excellent shave, and that too without the aid of a brush. An earthenware bowl, with a rim about four or five inches in width, one side of which was scooped out sufficiently to adapt itself to the form of the neck, was filled with warm water, and then placed beneath my chin. With a piece of soap in his hand this modern Figaro commenced rubbing and washing my face in such a vigorous manner that in a few moments my features were completely covered with a white and creamy lather. I was almost suffocated, and could scarcely breathe without imbibing some portion of the soapy mass. A single stroke of the keen-edged razor, however, afforded me instant relief. One side of my face was as beardless as that of an infant: another stroke, and the other side of my phiz was as naked as its fellow. A face bath of eau de Cologne ensued, and I rose from my seat a lighter and (as persons say who have just passed through some severe ordeal) I trust a better man! Heaven commend me to the barbers of Seville. They are a happy and harmless race, and the most delicate managers of the razor in the universe, They are well versed in all the gossip of the town, and are remarkable for their loquacity and good nature. Almost any matter of local intelligence you may be sure to obtain from your barber, whose acquaintance, therefore, is well worthy of being cultivated. The highest class of Spanish Figaros are but little below the medical professors in social rank. They are licensed to use the lancet and apply leeches,

Digitized by Google

these being operations which the doctors almost invariably decline to perform. As for myself, I would as soon consent to be bled by one of these fellows as by a more solemn practitioner, though, as a general rule, I think I should prefer keeping my blood within my own body.

Being desirous to see the Andalusian dances as performed at Seville, Pascual undertook that very evening to ensure the gratification of our curiosity. It was near midnight when we repaired with him to the place where the *baille*, or ball, was to take place. By means of a rude flight of steps we ascended to a large but common apartment, perhaps forty feet long by twenty in width, paved with coarse red tiles, and illuminated by a number of ordinary lamps shining from niches in the wall. On either side of the hall were long benches, completely occupied from one extremity to the other with dancing girls and their parents and guardians, who kept a strict watch over the movements and general couduct of their daughters and wards. The manager of the ball politely provided us with chairs, which our knowing guide did not fail to place in close proximity to some of the prettiest damsels, who, we deem it our duty to state, made themselves exceedingly agreeable to us throughout the greater part of the evening. Many of the girls who were present had just come from the different theatres in their gala-dresses, and the variety of colours thus brought together gave a singularly gay and picturesque effect to the general appearance of the assembly. The dresses, for the most part

Digitized by Google

consisted of a tight boddice of velvet or silk, and a crimson or yellow skirt, surrounded with heavy flounces of fringe, extending nearly up to the waist. The men were provided with high peaked and festooned hats, and wore jackets, in which all the hues of the rainbow seemed blended, while their bodies were encircled with crimson sashes, the fringed edges of which were permitted to hang down on their left sides.

We had not been long in the room before the guitars began to sound, and an electric species of animation immediately infused itself into every one present. All were eager for the dancing to commence. Even Ronalds and Pascual shared the universal enthusiasm, and the latter actually clapped his hands, in token of his uncontrollable impatience and delight. Suddenly a beautiful creature and an active youth, bounded into the centre of the cleared circle, and after two or three preparatory clicks of their castanets, performed for us a matchless Spanish Bolero, which called forth the most unbounded applause of the audience. We were delighted beyond the power of language to describe: as to giving the reader any adequate idea of the graceful movements and beautiful attitudes of the dance, we conscientiously acknowledge ourselves incompetent to the task. A succession of Andalusian dances followed, each of them affording us the highest degree of satisfaction and pleasure. Finally, a bewitching damsel, not above thirteen years of age, but as exquisitely proportioned

Digitized by Google

as Hebe and as beautiful as Venus, hovered into the magic circle, and executed the Spanish *Ole*, in a manner which quite bereaved us for a moment of our sanity. Every muscle and limb seemed to be in harmonious motion. Verily it was a delicious spectacle! As we gazed upon her, clad as she was in the sweetest charms of youth and beauty, and beheld the sparkling of her starry eyes; the dreamy waving of her arms; the easy undulations of her body; the gentle bendings of her head and neck; the vibrations of the castanets in her gloveless hands, and the inimitable movements of her tiny feet, we could almost fancy that no earthly creation, but the very Goddess of Grace and Nature was moving in all her perfections before our delighted eyes!

It was after four o'clock in the morning when we took our departure from the ball room. Pascual was in ecstasies, and Ronalds overflowing with rapture: neither of us felt the least disposition to retire, so we rambled about the white city in the calm light of the stars, and were walking along the fragrant banks of the Guadalquiver at daybreak.

"Well, upon my word," said Pascual, "we have made a night of it; but what the deuce I shall say to my wife, I'm sure I do not know. She's a very jealous woman, that wife of mine, and I'm sure she won't believe me if I tell the truth, so I must fabricate some ingenious lie. Indeed, she'll be the death of me if I hint a solitary word about the ball."

Returning to the Hotel, we took a refreshing ablution,

Digitized by Google

and afterwards a hearty breakfast, and then, in spite of the loss of sleep we had sustained, we made arrangements for an excursion to the ruins of Italica, which will be detailed in the following chapter.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIV.

EXCURSION TO THE RUINS OF ITALICA—THE BIRTH-PLACE OF HERNAN CORTEZ—HOUSE OF CORRECTION FOR UNFAITHFUL WIVES—A CHARACTERISTIC INCIDENT.

As soon as Pascual had made arrangements for horses, and brought them fully equipped to the door, we mounted the animals, and set out in buoyant spirits towards the site of ancient Italica. This famous city of the Romans was founded by Scipio Africanus, and is celebrated as being the birth-place of three Emperors—Trajan, Theodosius, and Adrian! Nothing now remains but a few stones and a half-buried amphitheatre, to mark the spot where it once stood: all else has passed away for ever. Getting without the walls of the city, we found ourselves in the midst of an extensive and gardenlike plain, with rich green meadows and cultivated lands, the country being on every side entirely open and unrestricted by inclosures of any kind. It was truly a

Digitized by Google

pleasing scene, and more charming still did it appear when I contrasted it with the wintry desolation of my own land, and the chill blasts which were perhaps at that moment whistling around my much-loved home. After a few miles, a range of high and verdant hills rose with an easy and graceful slope, decorated with olive groves to their very summits. Ascending one of the hills, we turned our horses' heads when we had reached a sufficient elevation, in order that we might enjoy the fine view from thence afforded, of the beautiful and sun-lit landscape reposing at our feet. The city in the distance appeared to the utmost advantage; every house, white as a snow-flake, stood in clear relief, while far above them all, loomed in sublimity and grandeur, the magnificent tower of the solemn and august cathedral. It was a transporting spectacle—this glorious temple of man, raising its head so grandly, amid so smiling and sweet a scene of earth.

At the summit of the ridge, we entered a small village called "Castileja de la Cuesta." Stopping at a low and insignificant building, more suitable for a shed than a human habitation, we read the following inscription on a marble tablet placed directly over the door. "Here died Hernan Cortez, a victim to disgrace and sadness, the glory of our country, and the conqueror of the Mexican empire: he expired on the 2nd of September, 1544." The house (if such it may be called) was at the period of our visit, tenanted by a poor but proud apothecary, who, according

Digitized by Google

to his own account, had served as one of the chief-surgeons in the Spanish army during the French invasion. He very hospitably invited us within, and entertained us freely with fruit and wine, for which he absolutely refused to accept even the smallest remuneration. We regretted afterwards that we had offered him anything, fearing that we might have wounded his pride. Taking us into a small chamber, between ten and twelve feet square, "here," said he, "in this room Hernan Cortez died, and here likewise, this little child of mine, that you see laughing in its mother's arms, was born!" Upon our asking him if he found selling drugs a profitable business, he replied, "I might do tolerably well, if business and sickness came together. At this season of the year, when people have an abundance of money, there is comparatively but little sickness, whereas, in the summer, when there is plenty of sickness, the money is quite exhausted."

Having bidden the worthy druggist good bye, we remounted our horses and proceeded on our way. And it came to pass that as we moved onward, Pascual soliloquised thus.

"I say, Master Ronalds, what a con-fo-fo-founded humbug is fame! You needn't think I'm in-t-t-t-oxicated. That apothecary's wine has somehow got into my head: but I'm a sober man. I ne-ne-vever was drunk fifty times in the whole course of my Christian life."

It was evident that our poor guide had imbibed too

Digitized by Google

copiously of the hospitable Doctor's wine, though I'm half inclined to suspect he had found a quantum of liquor of still greater potency in some other quarter. However, he soon recovered his senses, when Ronalds administered to him a severe reprimand, and threatened not only to inform his wife, but to discharge him instantly if he should on any future occasion indulge in a similar excess. This terrified the poor fellow exceedingly, who vowed and protested in an extravagant manner that if we would only pardon him this once and promise to take him with us to Gibraltar, he would behave himself in the most decorous manner possible, for the future. Though we placed but little confidence in what he said, yet we told him we would "put him upon his good behaviour," and that if he henceforth conducted himself to our satisfaction, we would take him with us from Seville. This assurance restored our crest-fallen squire to his former self-possession, and throughout the remainder of the excursion he was as loquacious and entertaining as ever.

On reaching the village of Santi Ponce we were assailed by a throng of beggars, many of whom brought bits of polished stone and mouldy coins of copper, which they begged of us by the love of the Virgin to purchase, and thus save them from the calamity of starvation. We listened to their piteous supplications and afforded them as much relief as lay in our power. We then rode on to the amphitheatre, which is situated a short distance without the

Digitized by Google

limits of the town. But little now remains of this once stupendous structure. In the year 1774 the corporation of Seville employed its materials in the making of river dykes, as well as in the construction of a royal road to Badajoz. In its present condition, it presents an exceedingly impressive and melancholy monument of its former grandeur. Its form is clearly to be distinguished, and many of its arches are still visible, though sadly broken and half covered with grass and clambering vines.

We rode into the midst of the arena, where we dismounted, leaving our horses to graze upon the herbage, while we carefully explored the various vaults and recesses of the venerable ruin. The air was warm and still: not the voice of a single bird broke with its music the unearthly silence that reigned.

Returning to Seville, we made a brief halt at an old convent which had been converted into a penitentiary for the correction of depraved and dissolute women. The number here imprisoned was above one hundred, who we understood were kindly treated, though not allowed any egress beyond the bounds of the institution, until the period of their captivity should have expired. Those whom we saw were so old and ugly, that we were almost inclined to believe that the charges brought against them by their respective husbands must have been devoid of any substantial foundation.

Digitized by Google

The country through which we passed on our way back to the city, was of a remarkably fertile character, and lined with a succession of plantations and flourishing olive farms. The olives of Seville are of a superior quality, and constitute one of the chief commodities of the province. Much attention is paid to the culture of this fruit, and if the traveller's leisure will permit, he will not regret a visit to one of the neighbouring *haciendas*.

As we journeyed on, a trifling incident occurred, which very favourably disposed us towards the peasantry of Spain. A large party of field labourers, attired in scarlet jackets and sashes, were returning to their homes after the toils of the day, and were singing in unison a lively song, in token of the happiness within their hearts. The sun was now sinking behind the hills, and the stars of evening were beginning to gem the vast canopy of heaven. A soft and rich twilight gave a sweet mellowness to the features of the surrounding landscape, infusing thoughts of romance and poetry into our minds, and making everything appear to us like the scenery of a picture or a dream. As we reached the body of peasantry, they immediately separated to each side of the road, and as we passed between them, they saluted us with the beautiful expression "Vaga vel con Dios," (go you with God). A thrill of pleasure ran through my veins as I heard this national benediction, pronounced with such deep solemnity, and issuing like a full and majestic

Digitized by Google

chorus from the lips of these humble tillers of the soil. While thinking of this interesting incident, we crossed the murmuring Guadalquiver and for the last time entered the gates of Moorish Seville.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XV.

TRIP DOWN THE GUADALQUIVER, AND DESCRIPTION OF CADIZ AND THE CARNIVAL.

It was on a bright and beautiful morning that we bade farewell to Seville, and embarked on board one of the small steamers of the Guadalquiver for Cadiz. Pascual accompanied us, and seemed to be in such high spirits on the occasion, that Ronalds could not restrain himself from intimating in emphatic terms, that such unbounded merriment was altogether unbecoming in a man who was leaving an affectionate wife and child behind him. Our garrulous valet pleaded in extenuation, that his joy did not spring so much from the circumstance of his departure, as from the precious prospect of again beholding Gibraltar, and of once more mingling with his brothers and sisters and early friends, from whom he had been separated for so many years. "I am one of those happy individuals," said he, "who

Digitized by Google

always look ahead, without minding what lies behind. Now when I leave Gibraltar to return, I shall not think of it at all, but shall have all my thoughts fixed in a focus upon Seville and my darling wife. True, she scolds me occasionally, and lectures me continually, but she is, notwithstanding, a good sort of a creature, and loves me a great deal better than I deserve."

The scenery of the Guadalquiver below Seville possesses but little beauty or interest. The only feature which relieves its dull monotony, is an occasional orange grove, from the midst of which peeps a cottage, like a bird from its nest, almost concealed from view by the thickness of the clustering foliage.

For the greater part of the distance the river meanders sluggishly through a low and marshy plain, unenlivened by a single habitation, and wholly given up to the dominion of roving cattle and aquatic birds.—A more dreary and disheartening prospect could scarcely be conceived. There was nothing upon which the wearied eye could repose with pleasure—a lonely expanse seemed to stretch illimitably on either side. As we approached San Lucar, however, the dim mountains of Ronda towered up in shadowy grandeur on the left, relieving in a slight degree the dismal nakedness of the landscape; had it not been for the quenchless mirth of Pascual, which was not in the least affected by the total want of beauty in the scenery, I might perhaps have relasped into that unenviable state so expressively termed

Digitized by Google

"the blues," but as it was, such a catastrophe would have been utterly beyond the verge of possibility. Merriment is contagious, and a solitary wag is oftentimes sufficient to keep a whole company free from misanthropy and gloom.

San Lucar is a decayed town of about sixteen thousand inhabitants, the country around which is sandy and entirely destitute of trees. It is a most forlorn and desolate place, where no sensible traveller will tarry longer than "to shake the dust from off his feet." But from this point, more than three centuries ago, the fleet of Fernando Magalhaens set sail, on the first voyage of discovery round the world, from which ill-fated expedition only one of his vessels ever returned.

We now took leave of the Guadalquiver and sailed out into the open sea. Our steamer was extremely small, and only adapted for river navigation, in consequence of which we tossed, and rolled, and pitched in so violent a manner, after getting into the agitated waters of the Bay, that Pascual soon lost his spirits and self-possession, having become home-sick and sea-sick simultaneously. Ronalds and myself, who were more experienced sailors, could not but laugh at the distress of our whimsical companion, though we used every endeavour to rally and recover him from the dejected state into which he had fallen.

It was not long before we caught the first glimpse of the beautiful city of Cadiz, seeming to rise, like a Snowy draped naiad, from the surface of the surrounding sea. We

Digitized by Google

were absolutely transported at the sight, and declared it the most enchanting we had ever beheld. So transparent was the atmosphere, that though we were still several miles distant, every building was as distinctly defined as if we had been within a stone's throw of the wharf. Our spirits were quite alive with excitement, as Cadiz was one of those few delightful spots, to visit which we had always looked forward with the deepest anxiety and pleasure. True, it has fewer works of art, or relics of antiquity, than perhaps any other city in the Peninsula, yet I venture to say that none produces a sweeter impression upon the mind of the sentimental wanderer, or leaves at the close of his visit, a more indelible effect upon his heart. No sooner had we reached our anchorage, than our vessel was beset on all sides by a fleet of importunate boatmen, with one of whom we instantly made arrangements for transporting ourselves and baggage to the landing pier. We were then detained for a few moments by some wily custom-house officers, who intimated very plainly, that if we would give tham a mere trifle, they would absolve us from the inconvenience of an examination: we availed ourselves of the hint, and shortly made our escape from the clutches of these terrestrial sharks.

Being now within the walls of lovely Cadiz, we straightway directed our course to the Fonda de Europa, where our amusing guide—who by the way had perfectly recovered from his fit of sea-sickness—announced us in such extravagant terms to the landlord of the hotel, that taking us for

Digitized by Google

gentlemen little short of royalty in point of rank, he introduced us to the very best accommodations that his house afforded, and actually it was the best establishment of the kind we had met with in the country. Our apartment was elegantly furnished, while its windows looked out on two of the principal streets, neither of which, however, was more than ten or twelve feet in width. The vista down one of these, from our front balcony, was unique and beautiful.

Shortly we sallied out to visit our worthy Consul, and present the letters of introduction we had brought him. The old functionary received us with cordiality, and vouchsafed in a friendly manner to do everything in his power to render our stay agreeable. After giving us an account of his residence in Cadiz, and supplying us with such information as might be serviceable to us in our peregrinations through the city, he left us for a few minutes and then returned, bringing with him a bottle of fine sherry, which he assured us had been in his own possession nearly thirty years. Having refreshed ourselves with this luxury, we sallied out with the Consul, who promised to introduce us immediately to the fashionable literary club-house called the Casino. In walking through the streets, we were particularly struck with their perfect cleanliness, as well as with the neatness of the pavement and the prevailing elegance of the dwellings, which are generally much larger and higher than those of Seville, though built very much in the same style, but surmounted by small square towers or cupolas, the

Digitized by Google

effect of which is harmonious and graceful in the extreme.

Upon the roofs of the houses moreover were arranged an infinite number of flower-pots and ornamental urns, which had a most pleasing appearance when seen from below. Indeed, in some cases, the flat roof of a mansion is converted into a miniature garden, luxuriant with trees and plants of the choicest kinds, and laid out in garden plots with an extraordinary degree of taste and beauty. Throughout the summer it is customary for the inhabitants of Cadiz to take their evening meal upon the tops of their houses, and even to hold their tertulias occasionally in that elevated, but most comfortable department of their mansions. By moonlight the scene defies with its beauty the most enthusiastic attempt at description. The snowy towers rise up around like gigantic phantoms, while the moonbeams are dancing merrily upon the rippling waters of the bay, and the innumerable stars and mighty planets are shining brightly within the quiet ocean of the firmament, and shedding their exquisite radiance upon the beautiful city of the sea. Then is the time to wander through the white avenues of dreamy Cadiz, and meet with those rare adventures which are so often encountered there.

Arriving at the Casino, we entered with the Consul, and were escorted by him through every part of the spacious and handsomely furnished edifice; and were much surprised at the sumptuousness and taste displayed in its arrange-

Digitized by Google

ments. It was not only well supplied with reading, billiard, and refreshment rooms, but had besides a grand apartment elegantly carpeted, huug with rich drapery, and decorated with very handsome chandeliers and mirrors. This splendid chamber serves on extraordinary occasions as a ball room, and its appearance at such times is quite that of a fairy scene. It was our good fortune to attend one of these rare and delightful entertainments during our sojourn in the city, which extended throughout that bewitching week, styled the "carnival season;" at this time Cadiz is the most fascinating spot in the world. Every one, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, share in the general festivity; and for a few days the sorrows of life seem to have been entirely forgotten, and nought but mirth and happiness appears to prevail.

It was at this joyous period, that we attended the magnificent ball given at the Casino. A more ravishing spectacle was never beheld by human eyes! At least three hundred of the fairest girls of Cadiz were present, decked in all the charms that youth and grace and beauty can bestow. Such a galaxy of female stars could scarcely be gathered together in any other land beneath the sun. The young ladies were for the most part attired with the utmost simplicity, being generally dressed in white, and wearing, with few exceptions, no ornaments, save the chaplet of blooming flowers around their heads. There was no gaudy display—no foolish affectation of style, but elegance and taste characterized the appearance, and graceful decorum marked the manners of

Digitized by Google

every lady whom we saw. No wonder that Lord Byron was so captivated with these lovely daughters of Eve.

The dancers did not confine themselves to the ball room, bnt likewise performed their magic evolutions in the brilliantly illumined hall below. This was quadrangular and surrounded by marble columns, while the intervening arches were hung with lamps, curiously painted in imitation of the Chinese style. No more dazzling spectacle could be conceived, than was presented by this beautiful patio as we looked down upon it from the gallery above. A fine band upon the corridor was playing a series of inspiring national airs, while the animated throng of chivalry and beauty which filled the capacious hall, was circling through the airy mazes of the voluptuous waltz.

On the evening preceding the commencement of the carnival, we visited one of the principal theatres, in company with the consul, who assured us that something unusual would certainly take place, expressive of the general hilarity produced by the proximity of the coming festival. We were not disappointed in our anticipations. The boxes and galleries were filled with beautiful women, and the pit with Spanish gentlemen, each of whom was dressed with the same elegance and care, as if for a fashionable ball. A more radiant scene of life and beauty, it would be difficult to imagine. The ladies in their gay shawls and lace mantillas, looked extemely fascinating, and wielded with such cap tivating grace their animated fans, that we were completely

Digitized by Google

in raptures with the ease and poetry of their manner. Among them was one, who was pointed out to us as the belle of Cadiz, and well indeed did she deserved so distinguished a title.

To say that she was beautiful is nothing,—she was unspeakably lovely—aye, fairer than the fairest image of a poet's dream! She was only fifteen—half child—half woman but without exception the most exquisite embodiment of female charms, that ever dawned upon my vision. I lack words and power to paint her as she was; but with her soft blue eyes, she gladdens Cadiz still, and sheds a sunshine on every happy heart within her sphere. Go then, fond reader, and gaze upon her celestial countenance yourself; listen to the sweet melody of her voice, and bask in the splendour of her witching smile. Thenceforth, the marble Venus of Florence will be forgotten, and you will realize, with loftier conceptions of truth and beauty, that nature in her uncurbed efforts soars far beyond the highest achievements of art.

When the curtain at length rose, the excitement of the audience greatly increased. No sooner had the actors taken their position upon the stage, than they were completely inundated with beans and confectionery, from every part of the house. Expecting an attack of this kind, they were not at all disconcerted, but continued the amusing farce to its termination, notwithstanding the storm of sugar-plums by which they were vigorously and unceasingly assailed.

The sport was exceedingly contagious, and I am certain

Digitized by Google

that for the time being, there was not a single person in the room, whose gravity had successfully resisted the nerve-restoring influence of laughter and mirth. It seemed as if grief had taken a temporary departure from the earth; but nowhere is there more actual misery and sorrow among men, and more painful solicitude and anxiety among women, than within the lofty sea walls of this gem-city of the ocean.

Cadiz, during the carnival, is the most romantic spot imaginable. You can scarcely believe that everything around you is real, and that you are not wandering through the shadowy mazes of some fantastic dream; no rumbling of carriages, nor trampling of horses, resounds through the narrow streets, and the only sounds which break upon the ear, are the varying and mirthful tones of the human voice, and the low dashing of the sea against the rocky walls. Though Cadiz boasts an antiquity greater than Rome, yet so far from its being a city of ancient ruins and crumbling monuments, no city freshly sprung up amid the wilds of America, could present a newer and brighter appearance. Being built upon the extremity of a little peninsula, it is almost entirely encompassed by water, and is connected with the main-land by a narrow isthmus, only sufficiently wide to admit of a single road. It was founded by the Phœnicians, eleven hundred years before Christ, and is consequently the most venerable city in Europe. Its population, which not long since reached one hundred thousand, has now dwindled to nearly half that number, owing to emigra-

Digitized by Google

tion and the loss of the transatlantic possessions of Spain. Its commerce is now restricted to a limited traffic in sherry wines, which last resource is gradually passing out of its hands. It has sustained many violent sieges, through several of which it has not passed unscathed, though on every occasion of this nature, its patriotic defenders have manifested the most determined energy and valour. At present, it is a city wholly given up to the ravages of Cupid and the blandishments of love. Life here is but a visionary slumber, a spot which Venus seems to have selected, as the sweetest birthplace for her charming and resistless daughters.

The city being lighted with gas, and illumined in addition, throughout the carnival, by the matchless radiance of the moon, presented the loveliest effect that can possibly be conceived. The clean and nicely swept streets were thronged with masqueraders of both sexes, and of all classes, so effectually disguised, however, by their grotesque costumes and squeaking voices, that recognition even of one's most familiar acquaintances, was rendered a matter of utter impossibility. Some were dressed in garments of snowy white, and looked like phantoms as they glided quickly by. Others wore dominoes, or loose gowns of black or blue, affording perfect concealment to their persons, while their faces were secured from discovery by means of frightful-visaged masks, with powdered wigs of preposterous size. At least nine persons out of ten, whom we encountered in the streets, were in disguise. Sometimes we would meet a party of men in frocks,

Digitized by Google

and then again a troop of laughing girls tripped along in pantaloons. Many of the chirping damsels accosted us, and occasionally mentioned circumstances of such a character, as aroused our curiosity in the highest degree. It was in vain for us to enter into surmises, in regard to the identity or character of the individual who addressed us. All was shrouded in impenetrable mystery, and we were unable to obtain the slightest clue respecting any individual whose conversation and manner had particularly interested us.

Secure in their disguises, ladies of noble rank, and of irreproachable character, frequent the masked balls of Cadiz on public occasions, and that, too, without the slightest danger of disagreeable scrutiny or insult. As it is not customary for the men to wear masks, except in the streets, the women have decidedly the advantage, which they avail themselves of in a manner that adds infinitely to the frolicsome pleasure of the entertainment. The gentlemen, on the other hand, not being able to distinguish the ladies, and fearful of whispering words of love, lest perchance the object of their attentions should prove to be their own sweetheart or jealous wife, are necessarily on their guard in their conduct towards the gentle sex.

The masqueraders, however, in the open air have a much greater license, the men as well as the females being equally disguised and screened from observation. These persons belong almost exclusively to the lower orders. Many of them have guitars, upon which they perform some favourite

Digitized by Google

air, while their companions join lustily in the chorus. The spacious squares are crowded with hundreds of people, the larger number of whom are arrayed in curious and fanciful dresses, and provided with every variety of hideous mask.

The Plaza de San Antonio is by far the most popular place of resort. Entering upon this splendid area, we were quite bewildered with the magnificence of the scene. It was densely thronged with a gay concourse of human beings, enjoying themselves in every conceivable way, and presenting, in the aggregate, an effect very similar to that of a mammoth fancy ball. The sound of music fell upon our ears, which we soon discovered to proceed from a circle of dancers, who were performing their mystic evolutions in the centre of the grand square. Tall white edifices towered around, while rows of orange trees, along the side walk, cast their long and flickering shadows upon the pavement. The stars burned brightly in the clear heaven, and a soft breeze, laden with the delicious perfume of lemon blossoms, gently refreshed our waning senses. The moon had disappeared from view and the midnight festivity was still at its height.

The solemn hour of one had just sounded like a funeral knell, when, more exhausted than desirous of slumber, we turned to retrace our steps homeward to our hotel.

Our ears were startled in the morning by a report that a young girl had on the preceding evening thrown herself from the balcony of a house near our hotel, and had died immediately of the injuries she had received. The incidents

Digitized by Google

relating to her sudden end were briefly these: A gentleman in Seville had given us a letter of introduction to his nephew residing in Cadiz, which we duly delivered. The young man honoured the epistle of his uncle by inviting us to his house, and offering to do anything in his power to serve us or add to the pleasure of our visit. Two evenings previous I had met him at the entrance of a masquerade, and had asked him if he did not intend to participate in the ball. "Yes," said he, "but I am expecting a young lady here to-night with whom I have recently had a quarrel, and I wish to see how she will conduct herself." He was proceeding to inform me of the particulars of the affair, when the conversation was suddenly interrupted and broken off by a gentleman, who had something of importance to say to him. Bidding him "good evening," I mingled with the crowd of masqueraders within, and had not from that moment seen or heard anything more of him.

But his words, few and unsatisfactory as they were, had made so deep an impression upon my mind, that the tale of the recent suicide brought them instantly to my remembrance, and filled me with a fearful sense of awe. I believed, as if by a presentiment, that our new acquaintance was concerned in the late catastrophe, and so anxious were we about the matter, that we dispatched Pascual to make inquiries, in order that we might satisfy our minds on the subject. He shortly returned, verifying in every respect the suspicions which we had already entertained. It appeared that

Digitized by Google

the young man whom we have just introduced to the reader, was painfully jealous of the Spanish maid whose fatal end was now the topic of conversation in every mouth. He had visited her at an early hour on the night before, and had in the most violent terms charged her with having gone to the masquerade in company with a certain individual, whom he regarded as a rival. She denied strongly his groundless charge, and begged him to have mercy upon her. Blinded, however, with rage, he refused to listen to her, but declared his intention of leaving at once the house never to return. "Then," said she, with the calmness of pride and despair, "go, if you please; but you shall soon know that Madelina was ever true and that you alone she has too deeply loved."

Rushing frantically into the street,—oh, God, what a horrible spectacle met his eye! She whom he had so cruelly injured, and who had worshipped him as the idol of her heart, was a mangled and lifeless corpse at his feet. She had thrown herself in her desperation from the balcony of her chamber, and the departure of her innocent and loving soul had been instantaneous! The young man, paralyzed at the sight, fell down in agony upon the cold pavement, and was carried in a state of insensibility to his father's house. We never saw him afterwards.

Notwithstanding the tragedy, which had cast a blight upon our spirits, and thrown the neighbourhood into a momentary panic, the festivities of the Carnival were in no degree interrupted or disturbed. The day passed by as gaily

Digitized by Google

and joyously as before. Hats innumerable were demolished; my own *sombrero*, which I had purchased only a few days previous, fell a victim to the mischievous mirth of the fairer portion of the populace. Every balcony throughout the entire length of the street was thronged with frolicsome damsels, each of whom was supplied with a silken bag, filled with beans, or something of the kind, with which she industriously pelted the passers-by. This curious missile was secured by means of a cord of sufficient length, by which it could be immediately withdrawn as soon as the purpose of its mission had been accomplished. No distinction of persons was made, but every body, old men, priests, and soldiers, were alike assailed and no one took the slightest offence; but on the contrary, seemed to enjoy the fun exceedingly. Our neighbours on the opposite side of the street kept up an incessant warfare with their confectionery bags against every one who chanced to pass within the limits of their jurisdiction. From our position on an upper balcony, we carefully watched the proceedings of the girls, selfishly congratulating ourselves that we were beyond the reach of their well-loaded projectiles. While we were indulging in this feeling of fond security, suddenly a missile whizzed through the air, and striking my hat with extraordinary force, sent it rolling to the farthest extremity of our apartment. Looking instantly in the direction from whence the attack proceeded, I perceived that one of the damsels, who had been watching us from below, had stolen up quietly

Digitized by Google

to the top of the house, where, being but little above the level of our chamber, she had dispatched the messenger, which had committed such havoc on my dilapidated sombrero. Though we were inclined to pardon the young lady, yet our incorrigible Pascual was evidently bent upon some plan of revenge. At length a thought seemed to strike him. Seizing an immense horse-blanket, which Ronalds always carried with him for his individual comfort, he secured it in the middle with a long cord, and then taking advantage of the most favourable opportunity, he threw it with such dexterity, that it landed like a huge shawl directly over the shoulders of the girl who had attacked us, to the infinite merriment of herself and of all the others who witnessed this extraordinary exploit.

A brilliant illumination lit up the city in the evening, and the most unbounded mirth prevailed. Description even of the best kind is but a mockery of such unique and beautiful scenes. We participated in the frolic till the bells of the cathedral tolled the hour of midnight, and solemnly announced that the period of the carnival was at its close.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XVI.

A DAY AT XEREZ—PASSAGE THROUGH THE STRAITS—SCENES AND INCIDENTS AT GIBRALTAR—JOURNEY TO TANGIERS IN MOROCCO, BY WAY OF TARIFA.

Being anxious to visit the wine-making district of Xerez, we set forth one lovely morning in order to carry this project into execution. Embarking in a small steamer, we crossed the beautiful bay in less than an hour, landing at a well-built and pretty town, called "El-Puerto de Santa Maria," but generally referred to simply as "El Puerto." Here the traveller will find a comfortable, though unpretending hotel, the "Vista Alegre," where he will be able to secure a well cooked repast, and if he needs it, likewise a decent bed, unhaunted by fleas, or gallinippers of any kind! Such pleasant quarters are deserving of notice, if for no other reason than their extreme rarity, as Spanish *Fondas* are, as a universal rule, the worst provided, and most uncomfortable

Digitized by Google

in the world. This is obviously owing to the fact, that Spain is the most lone and isolated country in Europe, both on account of the formidable barriers that nature has thrown around it, as well as the elaborate train of circumstances, by which travellers have been heretofore almost literally excluded from the Peninsula. The complaint, therefore, that travelling accommodations are so inferior, has been but slightly regarded, and in consequence, the stranger must expect to encounter many inconveniences, and be prepared with philosophy to meet them, if he would enjoy to the fullest extent, his wanderings in this strange, mysterious, and romantic land.

Having engaged a one-horse vehicle termed a *calesa*, we journeyed towards the city of Xerez, the distance thither being between six and eight miles. Though the scenery is not particularly striking, this is nevertheless quite an agreeable drive. The surface of the country was wholly destitute of trees, yet the low and swelling mounds were enamelled with rich grasses and flowers, presenting a most cheerful aspect to the eye. Through the midst of the broad valley to the right, the stream of the Guadalete wound like a serpent through the softly carpeted meadows, while upon its green and fertile banks, numbers of fine cattle were roving in peaceful tranquillity and scattering upon the quiet air the gentle tinkling of melodious bells.

In the course of a couple of hours, we reached the termination of our journey. The city as we approached it,

Digitized by Google

offered an agreeable and interesting spectacle, being situated on an eminence, and completely encircled by undulating hills, festooned with vines and dotted with flourishing *haciendas*. Xerez is a place of immense antiquity, and its origin, like that of many other cities in Spain, is involved in obscurity.

Directing our *calesa* to the "Fonda" in the grand Plaza, we there secured tolerable rooms, and after dispatching a hearty, meal of sundry chickens and boiled beef, accompanied with a bottle of excellent sherry wine, we sallied out in high glee to reconnoitre the town. Pascual being well acquainted with this vinous city, took us at once to see the greatest Bodegas, or wine storehouses, within the compass of its walls. The proprietors of these establishments are accustomed to treat visitors, particularly Englishmen, with the utmost politeness and hospitality. The most successful wine merchants are foreigners, being chiefly from France and Scotland. The Spaniards themselves are not especially fond of the wine, as they find it too strong and heating to be used freely in their climate.

The quantity annually manufactured at Xerez, ranges from twenty to thirty thousand butts, which contain severally from one hundred and eight, to one hundred and twelve gallons. These vary in price from two to five hundred dollars per butt, according to the age and quality of the wine. The Bodegas are enormous, substantially constructed buildings, and though above ground, are remarkable for their

Digitized by Google

coolness and freshness at all hours of the day, One of these establishments we were told, contained upwards of ten thousand well-filled butts. Here we were honoured by the gentlemanly superintendent with a glass of delectable "Muscadel," said to be from eighty to ninety years of age. It was nearly of the consistency of pure oil and of the richest flavour conceivable. This was not on sale, but was carefully guarded as a treasure, and used moderately in improving the flavour of younger and inferior wines. With tasting so many different brands, we became unconsciously and unintentionally, somewhat sublimated, feeling ourselves quite as tall as steeples, and as formidable as an army of Philistines!

On the following morning we rode out to the Carthusian convent, which is located about two miles to the east of the city, and is one of the most magnificent structures we had ever seen. It fell a victim to the decree of suppression in the year 1836, and is now but the mere shell of what it once was, having been rifled of many of its best pictures, and despoiled of its most valuable furniture and elegant decorations. It still merits, however, the careful attention of the traveller, who should by no means neglect the opportunity of visiting it.

Returning to Xerez, we made arrangements for our immediate transit to Cadiz, as we had already engaged our passage in the steamer which was to leave for Gibraltar on the ensuing day. Performing this trip without any notable

Digitized by Google

incident or adventure, we dined for the last time with our estimable Consul, to whom we are under deep obligations for his kindness, but whose generous old face we never expect to behold again.

The reader, I am convinced, will believe me, when I say that we took our final departure from Cadiz with the sincerest and most heartfelt reluctance. Pascual on the contrary, left with undisguised pleasure, and was absolutely frantic with joy at the delicious prospect of so soon setting foot upon that tremendous citadel of British power, where the friends of his youth still lived, and where he himself had been born.

The scenery of the Straits called forth our warmest admiration. On our right towered the gigantic mountains of Barbary, while to the left rose in bold relief the stupendous and clearly defined coasts of sunny Spain. In the afternoon the Rock of Gibraltar loomed majestically in the distance, while upon the African shore, and nearly opposite the famous garrison, stood the mammoth form of "Gibel Mousa," lifting its rocky summit in grandeur to the sky. These are the celebrated "Pillars of Hercules," like faithful sentinels, ever watching the narrow entrance of the Mediterranean sea.

It was within an hour of sunset when we reached Algeciras. This town is situated on the western side of the bay, and is the usual touching place of the foreign steamers; the distance from thence to Gibraltar is ten miles by land, but scarcely more than five by water. Upon reflection we

Digitized by Google

concluded not to cross over until the morning, as there was a possibility of our arriving too late for entrance within the town, the gates of which are closed regularly at sunset. We found a comfortable inn at Algeciras, where we spent a very pleasant evening. This place contains fifteen thousand inhabitants, and has upon the whole quite a picturesque and lively appearance. It is tolerably well fortified, and has a strong body of guards constantly upon the beach, in order to prevent the smuggling of tobacco and other interdicted articles from the English garrison into Spain. Since Narvaez came into power the national vigilance has been such, that the secret traffic formerly so extensive between Algeciras and Gibraltar, is now almost entirely destroyed.

The daughter of our host, who was a delightful girl, as well as an accomplished musician, played for us during the evening a variety of favourite Spanish airs, and also sang for us with consummate taste, several of the sweetest national songs. In her company the hours rapidly passed away, and we were not at all sorry that we had restrained our impatience, and adopted the sage conclusion of remaining where we were for the night. At length we retired to rest, but not a moment of sleep visited our eyelids. Poor Pascual was so excited and so full of plans of future enjoyment, that his tongue hardly discontinued its loquacious vibrations for a single instant, until the night had passed away and the rosy dawn appeared.

Taking the first steamer, after having despatched an early

Digitized by Google

breakfast, we crossed the noble bay in about half an hour, and set foot, with a feeling of inward satisfaction, upon that mighty rock, whose name of terror had rung in our ears from infancy, and inspired our minds with mingled sentiments of admiration and dread. Though the practical utility of this mighty fortress may reasonably be doubted, as, on account of the width of the Straits, a fleet of vessels may pass within sight of its bristling galleries with impunity, yet the moral sway it has exerted over the destinies of Europe, is indisputably vast, as well as favourable to the sacred cause of international harmony and pease. Gibraltar is the key-stone of Spain, and consequently the nation which holds possession of this impregnable position, must of necessity wield a tremendous influence over the magnificent land of the Spanish people. Had it not been for the interference of the British nation, Spain would long ere this have fallen a victim to the avaricious cupidity of France. The former has held forth her muscular arm of protection and preserved the old and chivalrous kingdom from her foreign foes, and has, moreover, restored its tranquillity, when menaced by civil strife. Indeed, England is justly entitled to the profoundest gratitude of each and every loyal subject of Spain.

Were it not for the low and sandy strip, called the Neutral Ground, Gibraltar would be completely encompassed by the sea. On the landward side the rock rises precipitously to an enormous height, and, with a single round from its galleries, could sweep the most formidable army, like feath-

Digitized by Google

ers, from the surface of the plain below. An attack on this quarter, even by the combined forces of the world, would be as dreadful and calamitous to the besiegers as if they were to rush in battalions from some awful precipice into the sea. Treason and stratagem are the only enemies which Gibraltar, in its pride and omnipotence, has to fear. Secure in its invincible strength, it may laugh at the futile efforts of the congregated hosts of earth. No power can take it from the Lion's grasp—no human agency can effect its destruction! The hands of man have adapted, but they did not erect it! Silent and lonely, it stands firm in the midst of dashing waters, the calm spectator of two oceans and two continents, a monument both of the skill and grandeur of man, and of the eternal wisdom and sublimity of that great Being, who created the planets and the stars.

Coming suddenly as we had from the brightness and beauty of Cadiz, the town of Gibraltar, though scrupulously clean, comfortable, and substantial, appeared to be wholly wanting in the elements of elegance and taste. This, however, be it remembered, is only the external aspect of the place. Enter its hospitable mansions and you will thank heaven that you are no longer in unsocial Spain, but are surrounded by the benevolent countenances of the majestic Anglo-Saxon race. Comfort, joy, and happiness shed their cheering rays around, while the heart of the wanderer regains its former energy and youth, as it tenderly reverts to the blessings and delights of home!

Digitized by Google

We found excellent accommodations at the Club-House, an establishment with which in all respects we were exceedingly pleased. Here we dined, and that too in the liberal signification of the term, a feat which, we may truly say, we had not fully accomplished since leaving the limits of good and merry old England.

The mental elation of our valet was beyond description. He laughed, lalked, raved, and flounced about, like a veritable bedlamite just escaped from captivity. Leaving us abruptly, he started off at once in quest of the humble cottage of his aged parents. Returning in the evening, he brought his brother with him, whom he introduced in the most high-flown and bombastic manner. "This brother of mine," said he, "has more knowledge in the tip of his little finger, than I have in my whole body. He speaks five languages, and is considered the best professor of the guitar and teacher of singing in Gibraltar. You should by all means take a few lessons of him. He will teach you more in one hour, than anybody else could teach you in a week. He gives lessons every day to the officers, some of whom play very well, and consider my brother the most skilful performer in Spain."

To my astonishment, my friend Ronalds immediately struck up an acquaintance with Pascual's musical brother, and entered into an arrangement for taking half-a-dozen lessons of him on the guitar, two lessons per diem. Antonio, who was a shrewd fellow, suggested to his new pupil, that it would be a capital idea for him to carry home with him a

Digitized by Google

choice collection of Spanish airs, as an agreeable souvenir of his travels, or as an acceptable gift upon his return, to present to some beautiful young lady, whom he wished to honour with some particular memento, or unique token of his regard. The wily professor furthermore intimated that he was in correspondence with a certain publishing house in Madrid, through which he could order anything that might be desired. "Now, if you wish it," continued he, "I will write on your account, and order a fine selection of Spanish music to be sent to my address without delay."

Ronalds swallowed, like a hungry gudgeon, the tempting bait, and having but a slight conception of the amount of popular Spanish airs, told Antonio that he might order forthwith a collection of the national music, including compositions both of a vocal and instrumental nature. I am certain that my friend did not anticipate that the expense would be greater than from five to ten dollars. What then was his surprise, on receiving in due time a huge box of printed melody, accompanied by a bill, little short of one hundred and fifty dollars in extent! Bearing his astonishment like a philosopher, however, he paid Antonio the required sum and declared himself quite contented with his purchase, which as Pascual quietly remarked, would come into play one of these days, when our hero contemplated matrimony, and even, perhaps, afford him no inconsiderable assistance in winning a wife, as music and money have, from

Digitized by Google

time immemorial, constituted the most irresistible attractions to the sex!

We spent a couple of interesting days in examining the wonderful fortifications of the rock, in scaling the heights, and exploring the galleries, and were well satisfied with the result of our laborious climbings and indefatigable peregrinations. The view over the sail-dotted Mediterranean, from the signal-tower, with the grand coast of Spain, sweeping in curves almost to Malaga, and on the other side embracing the splendid panorama of the Straits nearly to Cadiz, with the tall mountains of Africa frowning on the opposite shore, is as impressive and glorious a spectacle as the human vision was ever permitted to behold. About mid-way up the heights is a remarkable cave, whose mysterious limits have never yet been discovered. A number of attempts have been made by members of the garrison, to explore the depths of this cavern, but hitherto without success. Indeed, these efforts have been attended in several instances with loss of life, and the bodies of some of those who have disappeared, in their vain endeavours to penetrate the deepest recesses of the cave, have never since been reclaimed. It has been conjectured, by certain observers, blessed beyond their species with vivid imaginations and calculating faculties, that the Rock of Gibraltar is a mere shell, being riddled like a honeycomb with an innumerable number of subterranean aisles and winding passages, which not only extend to the level of the sea, but communicate by means of a sub-marine

Digitized by Google

gallery, with the opposite coast of Morocco. Should this be really the case, what an immortal prospect is offered to a second Guy Fawkes! Let him but snugly stow within the bowels of the rock, several thousand tons of gunpowder, and then by means of a match, in his own hands, ignite the combustible mass below, and oh! what power of language could express the tremendous and horrible catastrophe that would inevitably ensue. The rock itself would be blown into ten million particles, and the entire garrison sent literally and instantaneously to the other world. How awful the lurid glare, that would light up the waters far and wide, and how dire would be the panic that would spread among the fishes of the sea!

It is well known that Gibraltar is overrun with a peculiar race of apes or monkeys, though from whence these animals originally came, is still a matter of curious doubt and sage speculation. On pleasant days they may be seen, sometimes in considerable numbers, sporting with each other among the highest crags, and they are particularly visible during the prevalence of a severe east wind, which by operating disagreeably upon their nervous systems, induces them to seek the shelter of the western extremity of the rock. These ridiculous-looking creatures are destitute of tails, which circumstance, as may be supposed, adds little to the symmetry or beauty of their personal appearance. They live upon roots, and upon the fruit which they contrive to steal from the various gardens, and upon the whole seem to lead quite

Digitized by Google

an easy and comfortable life. Special laws have been promulgated for their protection, which secure them from the slightest molestation on the part of the garrison. It is a strange and remarkable fact, that no one has ever found the bones or carcases of any of these animals upon the island, which goes far towards a proof, that like the human family, these monkeys are accustomed to bury their dead! Besides these harmless creatures, rabbits and partridges abound, and are equally secure from destruction or disturbance. These find food and shelter among the luxuriant thickets of wild plants, which even on this rocky island are said to exceed four hundred in number. Truly, we were both surprised and delighted with the unexpected verdure, which clothed with its emerald mantle certain portions of the rock, causing even its precipitous heights to bud and blossom like the rose.

The Alameda is exceedingly beautiful, and commands magnificent views of the bay, as well as of the opposite mountains of Barbary and Spain. It was formerly a sandy and useless flat, while now it is laid out in delicious avenues, which bloom with trees and flowers, and are enlivened with the cheerful notes of birds. In the open area, on the side of the main promenade, the military parades generally take place, and a most splendid spectacle is that which is at such times presented to the eye. It is a most exhilarating sight; an exhibition of skill and discipline, which we think we can venture to say, has never been surpassed, if equalled, elsewhere.

Digitized by Google

The martial music of Gibraltar is fine; such perfection of drum playing I never listened to before, and at times strange longings came over me, to hear it once again; and at evening, how did our hearts beat with emotion, as the sweet and glorious strains of that divine air of England, "God save the Queen," floated to our ears upon the feathery pinions of the wind.

One of the most remarkable curiosities of the rock, is the picturesque ruin of a Moorish castle, which occupies an elevated position, and is the most conspicuous and interesting object upon which the eye can repose. According to an Arabic inscription over its southern gate, it was built in the year 725 by Abul Hajez, and is therefore one of the most venerable relics of the Spanish Moors. Near this dilapidated edifice is the entrance to the galleries, the construction of which was among the proudest triumphs of human skill, over the most formidable obstacles of nature. The numerous chambers are supplied with large port-holes, through which immense guns gape with their terrible mouths, threatening destruction to any haughty foe. The Hall of St. George is a majestic saloon, and is consecrated by the associations of the banquet of which the world-renowned Nelson here partook.

Having spent several days at Gibraltar, we resolved to make an excursion over the Straits of Barbary. As the voyage by sea was uncertain, we determined to go by land to Tarifa, and from thence cross in a small boat to Tangiers,

Digitized by Google

the distance between these two cities not being more than ten to twelve miles. This is altogether the surest and most agreeable mode of performing the journey.

At Algeciras we hired horses, and had an exceedingly charming and romantic ride along the coast. Our route lay partly over mountains and partly through a wild forest, intersected by a full and gushing stream. The road was bad, but the variety and splendour of the scenery amply compensated for every disadvantage. Our spirits were buoyant, and we looked forward with a feeling of deep but delightful anxiety to the new scenery which the coming few days were destined to unfold. Pascual was as merry as a cricket or a morning lark.

We reached the ancient town of Tarifa, which being supplied with but one *posada*, and that of the most wretched description, our worthy guide, who was, moreover, the owner of the horses on which we had ridden, undertook to secure accommodations for us of a decent nature, in a private house with which he was familiar. We allowed him to take his own course. He accordingly conducted us to a small but respectable house, which seemed to have for its only occupants an old woman and a sweet-looking girl of about fifteen, who gave us to understand during the course of the evening, that she was to be married in a few weeks.

The town of Tarifa is probably more Moorish, both in its appearance and the customs of its people, than any other in Spain. It is a crooked and labyrinthine place, but scrupu

Digitized by Google

lously clean and well paved. Its women, to this day, continue, in the manner of the Arabs, to envelope their heads and faces so completely with their mantillas, that nothing but one of their sparkling eyes can be discerned. This, however, is oftentimes sufficient to inflict a wound which all the doctors of Christendom combined would be unable to cure! Dangerous are the glances of the one-eyed maids of Tarifa! Seriously do we warn the fond reader to beware.

The only edifice particularly deserving of mention is the Alcazar, which, though a stately structure, owes its interest principally to the historical associations which cling around its massive walls. From one of its lofty windows, Guzman, afterwards surnamed El Bueno, threw forth his dagger to the Moors who were besieging the town, and who had threatened to destroy his son, whom they happened to have in their possession as the page of the Infante Juan, by whom they were assisted. As he hurled to his enemies his flashing dagger, the heroic father uttered this memorable sentence: "I prefer honour without a son, to a son with dishonour!"

In the morning we chartered a small boat with a single mast and lateen sails, to transport us to the opposite side of the Straits. The wind blew so strongly as to agitate considerably the surface of the water, and thus render our passage, though a quick one, exceedingly precarious and uncomfortable. Pascual was dreadfully alarmed, and as for

Digitized by Google

ourselves, we could scarcely have told, with any degree of certainty, whether we were the most of the time on our head, our feet, or our backs. Only a few days previous a craft similar to the one we were in, had been lost in crossing from Tarifa to Tangiers, which circumstance, as may be conjectured, tended but little to mitigate our gathering apprehensions. Finding we could not preserve our equilibrium on deck without serious danger of falling into the sea, we descended into the cabin, on more properly speaking, the inside of the boat. Here we were unable either to sit or to stand, as the height was not above three feet at the most, and not more than half this on either side, owing to the circular form of the deck. We were, therefore, obliged to stretch ourselves at full length upon the bottom, in which position we were kept constantly rolling by the motion of the vessel, insomuch that our stomachs became so sadly "out of repair," that we in consequence were thrown into misanthropy and gloom, and spoke not a word of comfort to each other. This is the natural effect of sea-sickness; one feels no inclination to speak to any one else, and is ready to send the first person to the regions below who has the temerity to address him. As we approached the Moorish shore, however, the wind died away gradually into a gentle breeze, and with this happy change of weather, our spirits began simultaneously to rise. "Oh, God!" murmured Pascual, who lay foaming and twisting himself into a variety of contortions upon the floor; "how ill I feel! it seems as

Digitized by Google

if I had been turning round like a wheel for more than a week—my head swims, and I can scarcely see."

Going above, we were astonished to find ourselves so close upon the land. We were, in fact, just entering the beautiful Bay of Tangiers, whose mountains, covered with verdure to their very tops, and rising in graceful slopes one behind the other until dim and misty in the distance, presented a grand and pleasing picture to the eye. The climate was delicious and mild, and the sky as clear and cloudless as if its azure serenity had never been ruffled by a storm. Before us, and upon the side of a hill, stood the Moorish city, which, with its low, white buildings, its numerous towers, turrets, and intermingling gardens, constituted a scene of striking novelty and beauty.

Owing to the neglect of the boatmen to procure a bill of health, we had considerable difficulty in getting ashore; and notwithstanding all the efforts of our most worthy Consul, we were obliged to perform a quarantine of three hours, during which time we continued tossing about at our anchorage in the Bay, calumniating the poor fellows whose inexcusable negligence had put us to this inconvenience, and watching the motions of the strange and uncouth-looking beings upon the shore. As a boat passed near us laden with oranges from some neighbouring garden, we hailed the turbaned gentry by whom it was manned, and succeeded, by means of Pascual's straggling words of Arabic, accompanied with illustrative pantomime, which not even a brute

Digitized by Google

could have misunderstood, in carrying out a negotiation for a small quantity of fruit, which, though inferior in size, we found to be as richly flavoured and refreshing as any we had ever tasted, either in Spain or elsewhere. Oranges are produced in abundance at Tangiers, and like everything else of a staple nature in Morocco, are sold for a mere trifle in comparison with European prices. It is the cheapest country in the world for a man to live in. Consuls on limited salaries live here as luxuriously as princes in other lands. Fish, flesh, and fowl are of the most excellent description, while fruit and vegetables are procured as easily and are as inexhaustible as the pure atmosphere that is breathed.

Permission at length being granted us to disembark, several swarthy and half-naked Arabs waded out into the water up to their waists, and having seized upon us as they would upon a bale of merchandise, carried us upon their shoulders in triumph to the shore. We were now surrounded by a group of greedy Jews and wild barbarians, each of whom volunteered to conduct us wheresoever we wished to go, expecting of course to bleed our pockets to the utmost extent of their ability. But as Pascual was well acquainted with the geography of the town, he pompously told the crowd to be off, and forthwith escorted us without any further interruption, to the admirable mansion kept by Miss Duncan, where we were made far more comfortable than we had anticipated.

The keeper of a good inn justly deserves to be ranked

Digitized by Google

among the benefactors of the human race; *ergo*, Miss Duncan, of Tangiers, is worthy of being classed in that illustrious category. Exiling herself from her own Scottish home, she has taken up her abode in the midst of a rude and uncivilized people, where by her kind manners and unwearied attentions to her guests, she has won for herself a reputation which every traveller delights to honour, and which even the untutored Moors themselves respect. Her house is not large, but it is as clean and comfortable as one could wish. Plain and unassuming in its furniture, yet everything is cosy and snug, and the meals as liberal in quantity and excellent in quality, as the best appetites could ask or the most fastidious taste desire. The nephew of Miss D. who lives with her, and acts during the day as secretary to the English consul, is an exceedingly intelligent and amiable young man, who being perfectly conversant with the Arabic language, as well as with the French and Spanish, renders himself of considerable use as dragoman to his aunt's establishment, and is also an excellent companion for strangers wishing to engage in a hunt or to make a limited excursion for pleasure into the adjacent country. There was likewise a Moor connected with the house, bearing the mame of Hamet, whose services are in great request, whenever an inland tour of any extent is contemplated. He was a noble fellow, well acquainted with Morocco, as well as with everything relating to its customs and people that was either instructive or entertaining. Pascual and he became immense cronies; and

Digitized by Google

it was amusing enough to hear the strange dialogues that ensued between these two eccentric creatures—part English, part Spanish, and part Arabic, which never failed to set us in a roar of irresistible laughter.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XVII.

A BRIEF EPITOME OF SCENES AND INCIDENTS AMONG THE MOORS.

It was some days before we could reconcile ourselves to the odd appearance of the town, so entirely different was it in every respect from all others we had heretofore seen. The generality of the houses were but one story in height, and had flat roofs covered with a species of plaster or cement, which keeps their interior perfectly dry in spite of the heaviest rains. The square court within each of these Moorish buildings has usually a fig tree in the centre, the spreading branches of which secure, even at mid-day, an agreeable shade. Beneath this is often seated an interesting group of living beings, recalling with their snowy turbans and flowing costumes, the delicious and dreamy tales of the Arabian story-tellers. The dwellings are wholly unprovided with glass windows, but have, as a substitute, a small door, sur-

Digitized by Google

mounted, in most cases, with a fluted horse-shoe arch, which they leave open during the day, but close securely at the setting of the sun. Through this aperture one often catches glimpses of a venerable figure seated cross-legged upon a mat, and inhaling the intoxicating fumes of his pipe, or perchance dreaming of the charms of one of those fair daughters whose radiant beauty not even the exquisite girls of Cadiz can surpass. Let but your glance be suspected, and the magic door instantly closes, not to be opened again for hours. The Moors detest scrutiny of any kind, and will never forgive one who arouses their jealous fears by intruding upon the sacred privacy of their dwellings. A single peep into their doorways may bring down upon you their bitterest enmity, while any attempt to communicate either by words or signs with their women would tend to excite against you the darkest feelings of hatred and revenge.

On the day after our arrival, we took a walk of exploration through the city and environs. So primitive and strange did everything appear to us, that we could almost believe we had been suddenly translated into another sphere. Nothing reminded us of Spain or of any other European country we had ever visited. The houses, the people, costume, and language were all entirely different, and we could scarcely realize that the short journey we had made across the Straits, could have presented to us so great a change. We wandered through the narrow and winding lanes like creatures in a dream. The white and windowless hovels

Digitized by Google

had the appearances of sepulchres, and the shrouded beings who hovered noiselessly through the streets, wore the aspect of sheeted ghosts! Thoughts of distant times came over us instinctively as we gazed upon these wild and novel scenes, so strangely passing like fleeting visions before our eyes. The reflection that we were actually among the Moors of Africa was one of mingled pleasure and surprise. As we moved on, the inhabitants of the town looked at us eagerly, and evidently with as much astonishment as that with which we regarded them

Passing the principal mosque, we stopped for a moment to glance at the interior. An Arab with a stern countenance then approached us, when, by dint of violent gesticulation on his part, and the occasional comprehension of a single word by Pascual, he gave us to understand that it was not allowed for Christians to enter the mosque, and we must, therefore, leave the premises immediately. As we were about doing so, a venerable individual, with a capacious turban and long silvery beard, came towards us, and after pushing the impertinent fellow aside who had first addressed us, and seeming to rebuke him for his infringement of the laws of hospitality, politely informed us that we were perfectly at liberty to look at the mosque, though none but true Moslems were permitted to enter within its gates. We thanked the aged dervish, and then very coolly and dispassionately proceeded to examine the edifice. Pascual, however, who had not yet recovered from the affront that

Digitized by Google

had been offered us, delicately insinuated that, had we given him permission, he would have knocked the vile heathen who had first accosted us into the middle of the next century.

The interior of the mosque was perfectly simple, consisting merely of an open court, with an exquisitely beautiful pavement of small porcelain titles, arranged in neat patterns, and surrounded by columns and arches and massive walls. In the centre was a marble fountain, at which several disciples of Mahomet were engaged in performing their sacred ablutions, forming a picturesque and interesting group. We observed that the Moors on entering removed their slippers, leaving them in niches along the corridor, until they were ready for their departure. This is done out of respect for the holiness of the place. As for the Jews, who are treated in the most brutal manner in Morocco, whenever they pass one of the Moorish mosques, they are obliged to uncover their feet, under penalty of the severest punishment.

The mosque of which we have been speaking, is the largest in Tangiers, and has a tall square tower, elegantly carved in arabesque, which bears a striking resemblance to the Giralda of Seville. The form and decorations are the same, and show conclusively that the Moor of the present day, though encrusted with ignorance and barbarism, inherits in his nature germs of those original powers which were manifested by his ancestors, and which only require

Digitized by Google

the genial influences of liberty and education to develope in his own bosom.

The Moors are remarkably strict in their religious devotions. Several times during the day the voice of the *muezzin* may be heard from the top of the tower calling the Moslems to prayer. Wherever they may be, as soon as this welcome sound reaches their ears, they fall upon their knees, and with fervid earnestness worship from their hearts the great and invisible Spirit who fills immensity with his mysterious presence, and controls with his mighty influence the secret movements of the universe. It is a solemn spectacle to behold a Mahometan at his prayers. Nothing is done for the sake of form. There is no hypocrisy or vain mockery of the Creator, but every word gushes forth like a natural and exhaustless stream, whose sources lie within the unexplored recesses of the soul! Prayer is the grateful tribute which the innocent and unsophisticated heart yields involuntarily towards that incomprehensible Being from whom all benefits and blessings flow.

As we were quietly loitering through the tortuous streets we arrived at a certain Moorish coffee-house, into which Pascual conducted us with as much *sang-froid* as if he were the actual proprietor of the establishment. The apartment into which we were thus ushered was about forty feet in length by ten or more in width. Upon the floor were seated at their ease, and with their legs crossed and gathered up in the Oriental style, from fifteen to twenty of

Digitized by Google

the natives, with rude turbans and flowing haiks of the coarsest material. All of them evidently belonged to the lowest order. In the midst of this grotesque collection of human beings was a small furnace and earthen vessel, from which arose like incense the delicious fumes of fragrant Mocha. The Moors seemed pleased at our visit, and invited us by "signs and wonders" to sit down and make ourselves comfortable. This we did without further intreaty, crossing our legs like the others, in order to economise space. We were then presented with pipes and tobacco, and were soon smoking away at a rate that would have astonished even a locomotive, and which effectually concealed us in a cloud of light and curling vapour. The Moors were surprised at the tranquillity of our behaviour, but liked us all the better for our cordiality, as the confidence we thus manifested among perfect strangers was, in reality, a compliment to their character. Throw yourself upon the hospitality of this strange people, and you need have no suspicions in regard to your safety. Not a hair of your head will suffer harm. Even their bitterest enemy under similar circumstances would be as secure as if in his own dwelling. They would even defend him with their own lives. Whatever may be their vices and faults, yet their virtues are unquestionable, and the chief of these is hospitality. Seek the shelter of his cottage, and you make the Moor, for the time being, your faithful slave.

The natives of Tangiers, besides tobacco, make use

Digitized by Google

very generally of another species of plant far more powerful in its narcotic effects, which is known among them by the name of *Hashish*. This is consumed in a short pipe, the bowl of which is not larger in size than an ordinary English thimble. It is moreover taken internally, mingled with a variety of ingredients, in which state it is said to be singularly beneficial in certain diseases. In either manner it is highly intoxicating in its influence, rousing the subject for a brief period into boisterous laughter and ecstatic demonstrations of delight, and then sinking him in a dreamy trance, resembling catalepsy, which usually continues for a number of hours. In this state, it is said that gorgeous visions pass before the mind, and that one's whole past life presents itself in review before the inward eye, while the future is clothed in purple and gold, rivalling with its hues the splendour of an Eastern horizon, just before the rising of the sun. Though this weed is so universally used by the great mass of the people, who fly to it as a refuge from the cares and troubles of life, yet among the higher and wealthier classes it is discarded altogether. The Moorish gentleman is a model of sobriety and honour. He is strictly temperate in his habits, and an earnest advocate of truth. He is never intoxicated, seldom provoked, scrupulous in the cleanliness of his body and apparel, and rarely guilty of a disgraceful action. He neither smokes, drinks, nor chews, and is most charitable towards the poor. Many

Digitized by Google

a gentlemanin our own land might reap great profit from imitating the example of the noble Moor.

Proceeding on our walk, we finally passed through one of the gates of the city, when we found ourselves in the midst of a strange and bewildering scene. More than a thousand Moors, Jews, and wild Arabs were assembled together in this immense and densely thronged market place, busily occupied in buying and selling every kind of fruit, vegetable, and meat. Among them were horses, mules, and camels, some standing tranquilly, while others were reclining at their ease among the wild and motley crowd. Here were collected every grade and class of the populace, from the rich and aristocratic merchant of the city, to the wild and savage Moor of the mountains, and the wandering Bedouin of the plains. An overwhelming hubbub of human voices filled the air, while the fierce gesticulations of innumerable arms gave an impressive animation to the curious spectacle. Without encountering any disturbance we walked through the assemblage, concluding our interesting inspection with the purchase of a few delectable oranges. We then continued our course to the Moorish cemetery, which was near at hand.

Here we found no imposing tombs or august monuments, to mark the resting-place of departed merit. The stones were generally flat, and entirely devoid of superfluous ornament. Upon several of them the exquisitely draped forms of mourning females were kneeling in silent adoration and

Digitized by Google

prayer. We watched these white figures for some time, expecting to see them rise and depart, and perhaps catch a glimpse of their countenances. But our waiting was in vain :—the solemn mourners remained as firm and motionless at the hallowed graves of their kindred, as if instead of being gifted with the breath of life, they had been suddenly changed into statues of still and enduring marble. The profound reverence for the dead which prevails among the Moors, is a feature in their character worthy of the utmost praise. This may arise in a considerable measure from popular superstition, but it is not on that account the less to be commended : despicable indeed is that malicious feeling which considers even that which is good as the offspring of some evil and selfish motive. So great is the veneration of the Moors for that which is esteemed sacred, that when a criminal seeks refuge in the tomb of a saint, his person is inviolable from official arrest. He may laugh at his foes, for he is safe from the contamination of their touch. These peculiar tombs are isolated and alone, and are occasionally encountered in the most desolate and retired places. They have the appearance of a miniature mosque, with an open entrance in front, surmounted with the peculiar Moorish arch. They are built of stone, and, like the dwellings of the living, are perfectly white.

We now pursued our way to the Alcazar, or royal residence of the *Pacha* or governor. As this distinguished personage was absent with his entire household, we obtained

Digitized by Google

access without difficulty, and spent an hour or more in wandering through the different halls and apartments of this extraordinary edifice. It would be useless to give the reader any minute description of it, as we have already said sufficient with regard to Moorish architecture, to give him a general idea concerning it. The courts were paved with tiles and the gardens decorated with extreme beauty, while columns, arches, and fountains gave a charming and illusive character to the scene. The art of gardening is carried to a high degree of perfection in Morocco, the introduction of this art into Spain having been the work of the Moors. These Hesperian retreats are but little embellished by works of art, but are peculiarly noted for their depth of shade and abundance of water. The visitor comes forth from the shelter of their delicious bowers, cool, contented, and refreshed. His eyes have beheld an assemblage of rare plants and beautiful flowers—his ears have been regaled with the sweet warbling of birds—his nostrils have been greeted with the most delightful fragrance, and his soul has been enlarged and rejoiced with the peaceful contemplation of nature and her varied works.

The Tangier gardens abound in orange, lemon, pomegranate, fig, and almond trees, which each bear fruit in this mild climate in the greatest luxuriance. The different kinds are severally grouped together, and never mingled, as is the prevailing custom in European countries. The avenues are wide, and are oftentimes arboured with a bamboo network,

Digitized by Google

covered with jessamine and creeping vines, the flowers of which depend in clusters from the leafy arch. Along these shady walks, on either side, are running streams, which impart life and fertility to the soil, and whose gentle murmurings serve to restore quiet and tranquillity to the agitated mind.

Returning to the city, we dined sumptuously with the consul. Among those present at the repast, was the famous Roman chieftain Garibaldi, who had been passing several months in this interesting country. His personal appearance was the very *beau ideal* of a bold and chivalrous brigand. His beard was of great length, while the long and dark hair of his head drooped in clustering masses over his shoulders. His countenance was pleasingly mild, but the sharp glances of his eyes told of the energy and determination that were lodged within his brain. In conversation we found him exceedingly agreeable. Though but slightly conversant with the English language, he speaks the Spanish and French with the same fluency as his native tongue. With regard to his usual occupations, he informed us that he spent the principal portion of his time in rambling with his gun over the neighbouring plains, sporting being an amusement of which he was particularly fond. He sometimes devoted entire days to these excursions, and though perfectly alone, never experienced any molestation whatever from the Moors whom he encountered, but on the contrary, was always treated by them with the utmost kindness and hospitality.

Digitized by Google

True courage is a quality which never fails to excite the admiration of these wild sons of Barbary, and the possessor of this rare qualification is secure of their protection and respect. To their credit be it said, they never withhold honour from him to whom honour is due.

In accordance with the advice we had received from several quarters, we resolved to make an excursion on horseback to the city of Tetuan, the distance thither being only about forty miles. It was past noontide on a bland and sunny day, that we set forth on this delightful trip. One of the Pacha's soldiers accompanied us as a guard, this being a precaution which is not only desirable, but is insisted upon by the Moorish government, in order to prevent the possible contingency of insult or robbery, and the consequent difficulties which might arise with foreign powers. Besides this military guard, (who, by-the-way, is responsible with his life for the safety of those confided to his charge,) we had two other Moors in our suite, one of whom was the owner of our horses, and the other a fine-looking fellow, somewhat acquainted with the Spanish, and whom we had therefore chosen as a medium of oral communication with the other members of our legation. A strange appearance indeed did our cavalcade present, as we issued in Indian file from one of the gates of the city. Our soldier took the lead, mounted upon a snow-white charger, and seated majestically upon a high Moorish saddle, provided with triangular boxes of iron for stirrups, while upon his heels were fastened sharp spikes

Digitized by Google

from four to five inches in length, which were used as spurs to lacerate the sides of the animal. His countenance was noble in its expression, and his features might have been termed handsome. His chin was decorated with a superb beard, while his head was encircled by a turban of pure white, bound around his brows with inimitable taste and skill. His garments consisted of a vesture of scarlet and blue, over which a light and graceful haik fell down in loose and flowing folds.

A curious gun of immense length, a curved sword, and a pair of formidable pistols, completed the uniform of our belligerent guide. Next in train followed our comical valet, now appearing infinitely more droll than ever, being astride a malicious mule, who, at every touch of the spur, kicked up her legs so violently into the air, as to threaten seriously the eventual overthrow of her rider. But Pascual was not so easily to be ousted from his position, maintaining his seat firmly, in spite of the furious efforts of the unruly beast. It is not to be doubted, however, but that he would have liked very much to change seats with any other one of the party, though knowing that neither of us could be prevailed upon to make so dangerous an exchange, he assumed an aspect of terrible bravery, and vowed emphatically that he was considered one of the best riders in Seville, and that no animal in the shape of a horse ever yet existed, which he did not deem himself amply competent to manage and subdue. This boast might have passed very well with persons

Digitized by Google

as credulous as himself for hearers, but we knew him too well to place any remarkable degree of credit in the grossly exaggerated statements with which he was continually assailing our ears.

While thus pompously eulogizing his own equestrian merits, he rashly dashed his sharp spur into the side of his savage mule, when, with a single tremendous bound, she freed herself from her tormentor, who, after performing a complete summerset, alighted upon his back, on the side of a soft and grassy slope. To our great astonishment, our jovial valet had not received the least injury, though it was long before he could reconcile himself to the disgrace which had befallen him. Remounting his stubborn mule, he became thenceforward rather more moderate in the use of the spur, lest a repetition of the same disaster might occur, from which it was not probable he would escape with eqnal impunity.

Engaged in conversation and charmed with the beauty of the country through which we were journeying, the hours rapidly passed, and the soft twilight of evening drew nigh. The meadows were covered with rich grasses and enamelled with myriads of yellow flowers. Here and there the land appeared under excellent cultivation, and frequently awakened by its exceeding fertility and beauty, pleasant ideas of the early pastoral times.

Far away in the distance, blue and mellow mountains, with clear and sloping outlines, seemed to be pictured in

Digitized by Google

easy relief along the margin of the sky. So quiet and transparent was the atmosphere, that the most remote objects were distinctly defined, and sounds which we at first fancied to have been created at our elbow, proved to have proceeded from nearly a mile distant. This phenomenon did not fail to strike us with wonder. It seems as if our senses had by some miraculous agency been quickened, or as if their scope had in an extraordinary manner been enlarged.

The sun was sinking to his rest, and the heavens were all a-blaze with a ruddy furnace glow. A soft and smiling light suffused the green and flowery plain. Crickets were chirping merrily among the grass, and night birds occasionally flitted through the air. Beneath the shelter of an olive grove to the right, a drove of camels were reposing themselves after the weary travail of the day, while, near the spot, a number of snowy tents were pitched upon a gently rising knoll. In truth, it was a quiet and beautiful scene! The evening shades were gradually becoming deeper and deeper. Hastening, therefore, our pace, but a short time elapsed ere we reached the wretched *venta* where we were to pass the night. This consisted merely of a vast court, surrounded by a rude corridor, with arches and pillars, beneath which a large number of horses and mules and uncouth beings were indiscriminately gathered, being, like ourselves, bound for Tetuan. On one side of the court was a row of dark and dungeon-like cells, the largest of which

Digitized by Google

was assigned to our party for the night. In size it was not more than twelve feet square, with a hard ground floor, and cold and damp walls. Here we remained until morning—our three Moors and ourselves. They occupied one side and we the other. It was impossible to sleep in such an abiding place of fleas, so we wiled away the moments with pleasant chat, and the narcotic fumes of our fragrant pipes. Truly, it was a night that we shall ever remember. There was a strange enchantment about it that we can never forget, but glad enough were we when it had passed away, and the genial daylight had appeared. About dawn, we were roused from a brief stupor into which we had fallen, by a terrific and unearthly uproar, resembling the roaring of bulls, the growling of tigers, and the screeching of hyænas combined. Being entirely ignorant of the origin of these frightful and supernatural sounds, we sallied out immediately for the purpose of investigating their cause. To our surprise, we found that the noise was produced by the camels, who were collected in great numbers in the court, and were in the act of being laden for their day's journey. It seemed as if they were lamenting their hard lot, so melancholy and sad were the strange groans that came from their throats. What an unspeakable blessing to the Arabs is the camel! with peculiar appropriateness has he been termed "the ship of the desert." No wonder that these poor barbarians hold him in such reverence and esteem. Huge and uncouth in his appearance, and deformed and hideous to those who do

Digitized by Google

not perceive and understand the perfect fitness of his curious organism to fulfil the secret ends of his creation, yet he has one redeeming feature, the beauty of which, not even the most fastidious observer could dispute,—that feature is the eye. This is clear and full, and animated with an expression of tenderness that it is utterly impossible to behold without experiencing an undefined feeling of admiration and delight.

Remounting our horses, off we started at a lively pace, which, however, soon degenerated into an ordinary walk. The road was exceedingly bad and crossed with streams, which in several instances we found considerable difficulty in fording. At one time we passed through a stunted forest, where the long branches of the trees threw their green arms athwart the pathway, rendering our progress extremely slow and tedious. It was a wild and desolate scene, and if at any moment a party of armed Bedouins had darted suddenly from the concealment of the foliage, we should not have been at all surprised, but on the contrary, as Pascual courageously remarked, should probably have given them a warmer reception than they had anticipated. Confident in our own resources, being six in number, and well supplied with guns, pistols, and daggers, it is very certain that we should not have surrendered tamely to an inferior force.

But as no opportunity occurred of putting our courage to the test, it is not easy to premise what the result, under contrary circumstances, might have been. As a general rule, resistance in cases of attack is useless, and one comes out

Digitized by Google

much better from the affair, by patiently delivering up his valuables to the robbers, than by foolishly risking his life in a vain defence of the trifling amount of property in his possession.

The day, as it advanced, became very sunny and pleasant. At noon we halted in the shade of a few clustering trees, where we seated ourselves comfortably upon the greensward and made an excellent lunch on the provisions we had taken the precaution to bring with us. Riding on, we frightened a number of rabbits and partridges from their retreats among the bushes, as well as several birds and animals whose names we never ascertained. At length, as we turned an abrupt hill, an extensive and well cultivated plain, variegated with gardens and meadows and thriving fields of grain, expanded in pleasing luxuriance to our left, while at the distance of four or five miles, and perched upon a rising mound, stood the Moorish city of Tetuan, shining in the bright sunlight like a pure and virgin pearl. As we approached nearer to the town, its beauty in proportion decreased, and when we entered within the limits of its whitened walls, we were quite convinced that it was but distance that had lent such enchantment to the view. Being in the Jewish quarter of the city, it would not be possible to give an adequate idea of the amount of congregated filth that presented itself to our eyes and noses, as our guide slowly conducted us to the particular tenement where we were to lodge. The streets were not only narrow and

Digitized by Google

winding but were moreover deep with slimy mud, in the midst of which the carcasses of innumerable cats and dogs were distributing their noxious and putrescent vapours into the air. Arriving at the house of one Solomon, a Jew, we alighted from our horses at his door, intending to tarry with him, if possible, for a couple of days. The money-loving proprietor of the dwelling did not keep us long waiting, but received us in a bland and affable manner at the entrance, and then accompanied us to an upper chamber, which was quite in readiness for our reception, being provided with a bed placed in a curtained niche, at each extremity, and also with a long table in the middle, evidently designed for the meals of the occupants.

There was a sinister and selfish look about the features of our landlord, which, from the first, induced us to regard him with a species of aversion. He wore a loose blue gown with a girdle around his waist, and a red and tasselled cap upon his head; he was above the average size, and rather inclined to corpulency. In front of our apartment was a corridor looking out into the court below. This was beautifully paved with painted tiles, and here were assembled the various members of the family of our host. As it was a festival day, the females were all attired in their gala robes, elaborately embroidered with gold, while costly bracelets encircled their arms, and sparkling jewels gleamed amid the darkness of their raven hair. Pascual was soon in earnest converse with the prettiest of the group, with whom he

Digitized by Google

shortly became so familiar, that our suspicious landlord began to manifest decided symptoms of jealousy and alarm, which, however, did not in the least affect the freedom or comical self-possession of our imperturbable valet. Dinner was soon prepared for us, and proved to our surprise to be a tolerably clean and palatable repast. One of the dishes consisted of the Moorish *kuscousso*, which, when properly cooked, constitutes an excellent article of food. It is a substitute for bread, and is composed of flour, granulated by a manual process into fine particles, which being steamed in a conical vessel fitted to the top of a long-necked jar of boiling water, and afterwards mingled with a suitable quantity of gravy and salt, is really a most delicious as well as nutritious treat for a hungry traveller to sit down to.

The next morning we took a Jewish boy for a guide, and spent several hours in traversing the city in every direction. The Moorish quarter we found the very opposite to that of the Jews, being as clean and neat in its aspect as the other was slovenly and degraded. The edifices, though not large, were admirably built, and occasionally decorated with a remarkable degree of elegance and taste. The Moors of Tetuan are a sober and industrious people, and seem to possess a much greater amount of intelligence than their countrymen of Tangiers. Their principal attention is devoted to manufactures of different kinds, some of which manifest astonishing ingenuity and skill. The fire-arms in particular are worthy of careful notice, being mounted in a peculiar and

Digitized by Google

original manner, and ornamented in a very novel and curious style, the stocks being sometimes exquisitely inlaid with patterns of ivory and pearl. We purchased a very handsome gun for about thirty dollars, which we now regard as one of our most valuable and unique curiosities. Fearful that the barrel might not be perfectly sound, the Moor from whom we made the purchase, made a trial of it in our presence, which completely satisfied us with regard to its perfection and strength. He loaded it with at least four times as much powder as would constitute an ordinary charge, and then discharged it in the middle of the street without the slightest injury being produced by the explosion.

The most interesting spot to the visitor in Tetuan, is the bazaar. Here every fabric which is either made in the city, or that is imported from Fez or any other part of the empire, may be found collected together and exposed for sale.

Each merchant has a species of stall to himself, with an opening in front like a window, from three to five feet square, within which he sits cross-legged among his goods, ready to attend the wishes of any one who may chance to favour him with a call. These miniature shops are arranged in regular aisles, and are kept cool and shady by a bamboo fretwork overhead, thickly covered with the rich foliage of creeping vines.

In the afternoon we took a delightful ride into the adjacent

Digitized by Google

country, and were highly pleased with the beauty and variety of the scenery, as well as with the fertility and careful cultivation of the soil. It was our intention to visit the royal gardens of the Governor, but were told that it would not be possible for us to obtain admission to them, as his highness the Pacha had been spending the day within their magic precincts, in company with the beautiful ladies of his seraglio. At such times the gates are peremptorily closed against visitors of every class. Returning to the city, we spent the evening with the consul, whom we soon discovered to be one of the oddest fishes we had ever fallen in with. The stories with which he entertained us were only to be transcended by the extravagant tales of Munchausen, or the extraordinary adventures of Sinbad the Sailor.

Before daylight in the morning we issued from the gates of Tetuan, on our return to the city of Tangiers. We rode briskly all day, but met with no adventures calculated to excite the interest or curiosity of the reader. About sunset we reached the termination of our fatiguing journey, and experienced a feeling of calm satisfaction in once more finding ourselves within the hospitable and home-like mansion of the excellent and kind-hearted Miss Duncan.

For a week or more we remained at Tangiers, leading a life more like a pleasant dream than an eventful reality. One evening we attended a small party at the house of a certain Jew, who was esteemed one of the wealthiest in

Digitized by Google

Barbary. From this novel entertainment we derived much gratification. There were from fifteen to twenty Jewesses present, the generality of whom possessed complexions and features of the most exquisite beauty. They were dressed in the richest manner possible, and wore splendid scarfs embroidered with gold around their waists: their dresses were of an expensive material, and worked with golden threads in a highly elaborate and tasteful manner. The dances which they performed in our presence were by no means graceful, but were certainly different from any thing we had ever seen before, both in their own peculiar character as well as the original manner in which they were executed. To us, their strange movements, which seemed to afford such delight to the more knowing observers, were quite incomprehensible and ridiculous. These consisted of a rapid shuffling of the feet, accompanied with sundry voluptuous motions of the body, which, to say the least, did not concur in the remotest degree with European notions of propriety. On the contrary, they appeared to us exceedingly vulgar and indecent. The dancers, during the performance of their gymnastic operations, preserved constantly the same position, keeping their eyes closed all the while, as if ashamed of the absurd and preposterous farce they were enacting. The music was of a rude and barbarous character, being created by a number of harsh instruments played by four or five turbaned Moors, who were comfortably squatted upon the floor. The refreshments consisted

Digitized by Google

of cake, fruit, and wine, to say nothing of a kind of gin, of which our host himself imbibed rather copiously, and which he strongly recommended to his guests.

One day we were informed that a Moorish wedding was to take place. Not even the bridegroom had yet seen his bride, though she was represented as one of the loveliest creatures in creation, and only sixteen years of age. In the evening a fantastic procession passed before our door, preceded by the firing of guns and the unrestrained merriment of human voices. At length came the happy groom, like a triumphal victor, escorting his yet unseen conquest to his own home, where arrangements had been made for the marriage ceremony to be performed. He was clad from head to foot in snowy apparel, and mounted upon a noble, milk-white steed. His appearance was extremely commanding and majestic, while the enthusiasm of youth and the vigour of manhood, were clearly expressed in his full and darkly glancing eyes. After him followed the concourse of his rejoicing friends, in the midst of whom was a mule, led by two Moors, having upon his back an ornamental box or cage, scarcely more than four feet square, within which, and secure from public scrutiny, was the hallowed person of the bride. The procession passed by, and the beautiful Moorish girl was soon resigned to the protecting arms of her husband though only to share, perhaps, with several others, the enviable sovereignty of his heart. A monopoly of the affections is but seldom met with in the land of the Moor. Variety

Digitized by Google

and change seem indispensably necessary to keep the flickering flame of love alive.

One cheerful morning we embarked on board one of the large schooners that are used exclusively in transporting cattle to Gibraltar, in accordance with a contract made with the Moorish government. About four thousand are conveyed thither in the course of the year, which will give the reader some faint idea of what enormous beef-eaters the soldiers of the garrison must be. On account of the failure of the wind, we did not reach "the Rock" until an hour after gun-fire in the evening, and were consequently obliged to pass the night aboard the vessel. In the morning we entered the town shortly after sunrise, and were delighted with the receipt of a huge packet of letters from our friends at home. Among the many pleasures which the roving traveller experiences during his wandering in foreign lands, none are so sweet as those which arise from the written communications which meet him at every step of his pilgrimage, which have been penned amid scenes far different from those which now surround him, by the hands of those whom he loves best, and who alone of all the world take any peculiar interest in his present progress or his eventual return to his own shores. Desolate indeed are the journeys of that man who has not the sympathies of distant friends to cheer him on his way; he is like a wreck upon the ocean, subject to the mockery of the winds and the waves, and liable to be stranded at any moment upon a rocky and unfriendly shore.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XVIII.

GLIMPSE OF MALAGA, AND HORSEBACK EXCURSION TO GRANADA.

LEAVING Gibraltar in the steamer on the following afternoon, we arrived early the next morning at Malaga. We had left our nondescript valet behind us, not having any further need of his services, nor wishing to keep him any longer absent from his disconsolate wife. He did not, however, seem to appreciate our kind intentions, but begged very earnestly that we would take him with us as far as Granada. This, however, we concluded not to do, particularly as he had recently broken his temperance pledge so many times as to render us somewhat doubtful as to his future reformation. After undergoing the usual tribulations at the custom-house, we repaired to the magnificent hotel, situated on the fashionable promenade of the city, and called in consequence the Fonda de la Alameda. This immense

Digitized by Google

establishment was under the management of a gentlemanly Englishman named Hudson, though it has, we understand, since the period of our visit, passed into other, and we fear, Spanish hands. If this is really so, then farewell henceforth to the wholesome English comforts and civilized dishes which once characterized the generous table of this spacious and elegant establishment.

With the general aspect of Malaga we were much pleased. Its population, which now numbers eighty thousand, is decidedly on the increase, while many of the private buildings are exceedingly fine, though bearing the evident impress of recent construction. For invalids the climate is undoubtedly the most beneficial in Spain, and in the estimation of many, is far superior, both in purity and regularity of temperature. to that which exists in the healthiest portions of Italy. Could those suffering from delicate or diseased lungs be induced to make a visit thither, I am persuaded they would not thereafter think of resorting elsewhere for relief, but would spend their winters regularly in the soft and transparent air of Malaga. They may, moreover, rely upon excellent society, upon charming rides and walks, upon good accommodations, superior fruit, delectable wines, and in fact every reasonable luxury that their hearts could desire.

The antiquity of Malaga is immemorial. It is undoubtedly, however, of Phœnician origin, and has, for a period of three thousand years, maintained a reputation for commercial prosperity and importance. In the year 1487 it was

Digitized by Google

captured by Ferdinand, after a long and bloody resistance on the part of the Moors. So momentous was this event, that upon the recurrence of each anniversary of the surrender, the bell of the cathedral is tolled at the precise hour on which the Spaniards took possession of the city.

The Alameda is one of the finest in Spain. It is wide, and is skirted on each side with avenues of trees, with stone seats and marble statues filling up the interstices of the foliage. At each extremity is a handsome marble fountain, one of which is of Italian workmanship and was presented to Charles V. by the Republic of Genoa. The daughters of Malaga are famed for their graces, and may be seen in all their splendour upon pleasant afternoons, when it is customary for *tout le monde* to assemble upon the Alameda for the purpose of taking their daily promenade. The scene which is then presented is both stimulating to the mind and beautiful to the eye.

Of the public edifices the cathedral is the most remarkable. This, though still uncompleted, and not without architectural defect, is nevertheless a strikingly magnificent structure, and will most certainly attract the attention and excite the admiration of every traveller of taste. The view from one of its towers, of the grand mountains rising abruptly behind the city, and crowned in several instances with ancient Moorish fortifications, of the valley of the Guadalmedina at their base, and of the garden-dotted plain, the domes and spires of ecclesiastical structures, and the

Digitized by Google

glorious mirror of the mighty sea, reflecting the city and mountains upon its surface, forms as varied and impressive a spectacle as the human vision is often permitted to behold.

The commerce of Malaga is confined principally to the importation of raisins, wines, and figs. From forty to fifty thousand butts of sweet muscadel are annually produced from the fruitful vineyards, while more than two-thirds of this quantity, according to Mr. Ford, are sent to America and England, where it is palmed off upon purchasers as "genuine pale sherry."

Having made the necessary arrangements for horses, we set out one sunny day for Granada. There are two different routes leading thither, one by Alhama and the other by Loja, the former of which, by the advice of our fat and jolly guide, Manuel Ramos, we concluded to adopt. Our horses were of the true Andalusian stamp, with flashing eyes, exquisitely rounded limbs, luxuriant tails and manes, and finely curved necks. They were noble animals, full of animation and life, and remarkable alike for the delightful ease of their motions, and the exceeding gentleness of their dispositions. Both the steeds and the ladies of Spain appear to have inherited their present beauty from the ancient Moors of the peninsula. The Arabian blood still courses through the Spanish veins, and warms the Spanish heart with Afric fire.

The road was good, and for a time bordered on each side with olive hills, affording at intervals glimpses through their valleys on the right, of the tranquil sea beyond: occa-

Digitized by Google

sionally our route lay upon the very shore, while again it would wind around the base of mountains and through wide and sandy plains, varied with the gigantic leaves of the clustering olive and prickly pear.

At sunset we were in the midst of a grove, from the sombre twilight of which we soon emerged, and after crossing a small but noisy stream, we entered upon an extensive and beautiful *vega*, walled in like an amphitheatre with hills and craggy mountains, and interspersed with green meadows and flowery gardens, inviting the weary traveller as it were to an Eden of loveliness and repose. Before us, and enthroned upon a conspicuous eminence, stood the dilapidated city of Velez Malaga, with its towers and cupolas, radiant with the golden flush of evening.

Here we spent the night, though in a very uncomfortable and unsatisfactory manner. Nocturnal intruders beset us in our slumbers, and kept us in a state of torment till the morn.

Ronalds was exasperated beyond endurance, and swore by all the gods in the heathen mythology, that he would sooner blow out his brains than spend another night in such a flea-ridden apartment. To add to the insult and complete the farce, a bill was thrust in our faces at our departure, that would even have astonished a long-pursed Nabob, who had enjoyed the luxuries and comforts of the most aristocratic hotel in the English metropolis. We paid it, of course, but

Digitized by Google

we felt on leaving the house as if we had just come forth from a den of thieves.

Continuing our journey we passed through a wild and mountainous country, relieved here and there with crystal streams and patches of rich verdure, while the deep valleys were carpeted with moist grasses and enriched with fragrant shrubbery and blossoming orange groves. At noonday we rested on the banks of a rippling brook and refreshed ourselves with wine and juicy fruit: remounting our horses, we rode on without adventure, arriving late in the afternoon at the celebrated but ill-fated city of Alhama The situation of this town is extremely striking and picturesque, occupying the summit of a steep acclivity, (which appears to have been created by some terrible convulsion of nature,) and surrounded by abrupt precipices and yawning chasms, while around its base the river Marchan sweeps with a rapid and roaring torrent. Behind it rises the rocky *sierra* to the height of several thousand feet. This romantic place, so marvellously barricaded by nature, and once strongly fortified by art, constituted for many years the land key of Granada, but was finally taken from the Moors by the Marquis of Cadiz, who effected this important result, not so much by valour and force of arms, as by means of a well-considered and skilfully arranged stratagem, that threw the Moors off their guard and gave their beloved city into his hands. This triumph filled the Moslems with consternation

Digitized by Google

and dismay, and inspired the Christian with additional confidence and enterprise.

This event presaged the final downfall of Granada, and the consequent expulsion of the Moorish race from Spain. The night we spent at Alhama was quite as sleepless as the one we had passed at Velez Malaga, and that too from a similar cause. Ronalds was in a perfect rage, and as to myself I could not but think in moments of provocation, that the imaginary and romantic pleasures of our journey, but poorly compensated for the physical torments and inconveniences we were forced to endure. Truly, a flea is after all but a small animal to make such a great noise about, though there are few monsters however sharp their claws or enormous their developments, that are capable of producing so intense a degree of human suffering. A philosopher may talk wisdom by the volume, while his body is tranquil and free from pain, but put a single hungry flea within his boot and his ill-nature will surpass that of a petted and sickly child. Things apparently trifling are oftentimes the most annoying, and create the most indelible impressions upon the character. That a man should grow up good-humoured among fleas and mosquitoes, unless he possess a hide equal in toughness to that of a rhinoceros, I believe to be a moral impossibility.

Shortly after leaving Alhama in the morning, we reached the famous Roman baths, which were in former times in such high repute for their sanatory virtues. The bathing establishment is situated at the opening of a rocky gorge,

Digitized by Google

from which issues a dashing and foaming stream. We halted at this place and took a bath. The mineral water was so exceedingly warm, that we felt quite parboiled on emerging once more into the open air. However, I shall never forget the delicious sensation of lightness and buoyancy that followed.

Resuming our saddles, we continued to ride onward for hours, winding through precipitous valleys, climbing mountains, fording streams, and crossing grassy plains. At length we arrived at the village of La Mala. Here we drank a glass of wine and lighted our cigars: we were now near the termination of our journey. An indescribable feeling of curiosity and excitement took possession of my mind. I spoke scarcely a word to my companion; my thoughts were wandering through the fields of memory and the past. The history of the Moor passed in all its romantic brilliancy before me. The flashing of his spear in the sunlight glittered upon my eye, and the deep tones of his voice fell like a mournful knell upon my ear: we were approaching the terrestrial paradise of his exiled race, whose gardens have been watered with the blood of his ancestors, and fertilized with the ashes of his chivalrous but unfortunate kindred.

Having at length attained the summit of a steep and barren hill, the dreariness of which was not relieved by a single spot of green, a spectacle of overwhelming sublimity and beauty burst like enchantment upon our enraptured vision. Far down below us stretched the magnificent Vega of Gra-

Digitized by Google

nada, its broad surface covered with lovely gardens, flourishing plantations, charming fields, and waving groves, while through the vast expanse of unfading verdure ran numerous glistening streams, shining in the distance like ribbons of silver, and intersecting the beautiful plain in every possible direction. Reposing upon the undulating and swelling bosom of this delightful Eden, we beheld at a glance no less than thirty shining villages, though many of them were nearly concealed from view by the wonderful luxuriance of surrounding nature. They looked like islands of pearl floating in dreamy splendour upon an emerald and quiet sea. Around this enchanting Vega circled the everlasting and gigantic range of the Sierra Nevada, with its loftiest summits and adamantine peaks crested with eternal diadems of virgin snow. Near the base of these tremendous bulwarks and on the opposite side of the plain sparkled the domes and spires of the ancient and best loved city of the Moors, while immediately above it, and like an ever-watchful sentinel, stood the immense fortress of the Alhambra, once the most voluptuous abode of royalty on earth, now a silent and lonely ruin, but magically beautiful even in its desolation and decay.

Standing in our stirrups, we feasted our eyes in unspeakable ecstacy upon the glorious scene, until nearly blinded with the intense brilliancy of the light, we plunged the spurs into our impatient steeds and dashed with the speed of the wind down the side of the sloping mountain and over the smooth surface of the tempting plain. We were quite wild

Digitized by Google

with excitement, and scarcely checked our frantic space until actually within the gates of the deeply interesting city we had so much desired to behold. No other place we had visited in Spain gave us so great a degree of pleasure in the anticipation of seeing it as Granada, and we may safely add that no other more amply fulfilled the expectations we had formed. The town itself, in regard to the architecture of its buildings and the elegance of its streets, is inferior, perhaps, to many of the principal cities in Spain, though it is certain that not one of them exercises so powerful a witchery over the imagination, or enchains the traveller to the spot with such an inexpressible and resistless force.

A thousand recollections of its former luxury and grandeur throng upon the mind. The magnificence of its palaces and the lordly splendour of its private mansions; the sumptuousness of its mosques and the elegance of its fountains; the intelligence, bravery, and chivalry of her sons, and the chastity, devotion, and matchless beauty of her daughters, all these suggest themselves to the busy fancy and fill the soul with thoughts that seek in vain the utterance of words. That which once existed in unrivalled splendour and glory, but which has now passed away for ever, presents a stronger attraction to the cultivated mind than the greatest wonders of human art which, unhallowed by time, are now scattered around us. We naturally venerate the antique; we love to contemplate that which is old; we delight to bury ourselves in visionary reveries of the past. But from whence springs

Digitized by Google

this singular feeling so universal among mankind? Why should that which was created long years ago have more value than that which is more perfect and new? It is simply because of a vague association which the ideas of infinity and immensity have with the things and beings of this uncertain life, that we attach such importance and interest to objects that speak to us of a greater age than we ourselves have seen. That which we behold existed before we were born, and may still exist when we, the mere creatures of an hour, have ceased to breathe, or have been translated into other spheres. We are persuaded of our own mortality. This is the sage lesson we glean from every ruin or hoary vestige of former years, and it is this sentiment which overwhelms us with such an undefinable sense of mingled curiosity and veneration. From whence we came is as terrible a question as whither we shall go! Anything which tends to recall either of these awful considerations to the mind, possesses a fascination which is generally misunderstood, but which cannot fail to make a lasting impression upon the soul.

As soon as we were within the walls of the city, we repaired to the Fonda de Amistad, kept by an intelligent Spaniard of the name of Velasquez, who speaks several languages, and is well supplied with every variety of local information that the traveller can desire. He is quite accommodating in his disposition, always ready to do anything to promote the comfort of his guests, and particularly

Digitized by Google

polite and attentive to them on the *first* day of their arrival. Having made sure of his prey, he rather falls off in his attentions afterwards, seeming to reserve all his urbanity for new comers. However, if you compliment him pretty freely, supply him daily with choice cigars, and refrain from too great familiarity with his fine-looking wife, of whom he is extravagantly proud, you may rely upon being well treated and being made as snug and comfortable as you could with reason expect. Some of my readers may probably visit Granada, and if so, they will find better quarters with Velasquez than elsewhere, and therefore am I thus minute in my account of him. He is unfortunately afflicted with an ill temper, though, from motives of policy, he seldom discloses this important fact to his guests, but, on the contrary, manifests towards them the hospitality of an Englishman, coupled with the polite grimace and innumerable bows of a native of France. Upon the whole, with a little management on your part, founded on the knowledge I have already given you of his character, you may convert him into a most rare and excellent landlord, and make him your obedient and humble servant.

If the reader has not skipped too hastily over the pages of this plain and unpretending narrative, he will please to recall to his recollection the eccentric French lady with whom the writer shared a solitary dinner at Segovia. That singular woman had completely haunted me ever since. I encountered her fifty times in Madrid, as often at Seville and

Digitized by Google

Cadiz, and again at Gibraltar. Here I lost sight of her, and though hoping the fair sex will not charge me with any want of gallantry, I declare positively that it was my earnest wish never to fall in with that strange and unaccountable woman again. It seemed literally that she was my evil genius. Wherever I turned there she was, like a frightful spectre before me! Go where I would, yet it seemed utterly impossible to avoid her. She was truly omnipresent, but on no other account could have been suspected of being a guardian angel. She had neither youth nor beauty, yet whenever I met her she had some fresh captive in her train, who appeared for the time to officiate as her protector. Easy and polished in her manners, she was everywhere treated as a lady, and met with the most marked deference and respect from all who approached her. My surprise grew into astonishment, and from astonishment into curiosity and wonder. It was my belief that I had seen her for the last time, but alas! this was but a fond hallucination of the mind, that the future was destined to destroy. Upon asking Velasquez what strangers he had with him in the house, he replied,

"We have at present only two or three gentlemen, and a certain French lady——"

"Don't say another word," I exclaimed; "I knew she was here before you told me; instinct assured me of the fact."

"Who is she?" inquired Ronalds of the landlord. "We

Digitized by Google

have met her about ten thousand times since we left Madrid. She's an odd woman, to say the least."

"Why," replied Velasquez, "I understand that she is immensely rich, and has an income of fifty thousand francs per annum. She asks so many questions that I am inclined to think she is writing a book, and it will, therefore, be for ny interest to keep on the right side of her. Yesterday she told me that she was expecting Count ——— in a day or two, and that then she intended leaving the hotel with the view of taking private lodgings. What to make of the matter I really don't know. She is one of the strangest women I have ever had in my house."

The ringing of the bell now announced that the repast we had ordered was ready for us. We soon sat down to it with keen appetites and a clear conscience. The repast was served upon a table under the veranda, where, refreshed by the cool breezes from the mountains, we snuffed the perfumes from the garden, and listened with pleasure to the low music of its ever-bubbling fountain.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XIX.

A PEEP AT THE ALHAMBRA, AND A WEEK SPENT AMID THE WILD SCENES AND DELIGHTS OF GRANADA.

We had not been at the hotel more than an hour, when a young man surnamed "Bensaken," introduced himself to us, and requested the privilege of acting as our cicerone, in visiting the various antiquities and objects of interest in Granada. It was our intention to have employed the celebrated *Mateo Ximenez*, who we understood was still extant, but being much pleased with the appearance and manners of the youthful "Bensaken," we were finally induced to give him the preference, nor did we afterwards have any reason to regret the choice. Notwithstanding his jaunty and somewhat foppish air, having rings in his ears, upon his fingers, and two or three encircling his neckerchief, yet there was a marked expression of good nature and intelligence about his countenance, that instantly and strongly prepossessed us in

Digitized by Google

his favour. With him for our guide, we penetrated the most remote and obscure parts of the city, with every nook and cranny of which he appeared to be perfectly acquainted. He had made this city his study, and had mastered almost everything relating either to its curiosities, its ruins, and historical associations, though beyond this the wide world was to him almost a *terra incognita*. But he seemed to be none the less happy and contented on account of his ignorance of the Great Beyond! His desires were bounded by the narrow circle whose horizon encompassed his own home. Here were his affections and his friends. Here he was known, respected, and beloved. Why should he seek to wander in distant lands? Where would he be able to find a brighter sky, a purer air, or scenery as beautiful and grand

Such questions as these proposed themselves to my mind, as we strolled up in the morning to visit the dilapidated palace and fortress of the ancient Moorish kings. Passing through a massive stone gateway, we entered a spacious and thickly wooded park, and were now within the palatial jurisdiction of the far-famed Alhambra! An impressive stillness reigned throughout the umbrageous groves, unbroken by the varied sounds of animated nature, lulled as it were into quiet repose, by the sultry warmth of day—the rippling of hidden streams, and the soft murmuring of the fountains. It was in the early spring-time, and the overhanging branches of the trees were covered with a delicate drapery of the lightest green. The light stole in flickering

Digitized by Google

rays through the interstices of the foliage and played in tesselated shadows upon the ground. The spirit of enchantment seemed to pervade the air and to fill the place with the imposing silence of a spell. We talked merrily together, but our voices sounded loud and strange—we scarcely recognized their discordant and altered tones.

The avenue through which we were walking was completely embowered—a long green aisle in the vast cathedral of nature. It was not level, but rose with an easy and gradual slope. Along its margin were marble seats for such as wish to rest or linger amid these delicious shades. Being impatient to see the magic pile whose fairy legends had charmed our childish years, we proceeded at a rapid pace and soon reached the grand entrance, called the Gate of Judgment. An inscription over the inner doorway concludes with the following words: "May the Almighty make this gate a protecting bulwark, and write down its erection among the imperishable actions of the just." Over the outer arch is a figure of an open hand, which was probably intended as a talisman against the influence of the evil eye, so much dreaded to this day among the orientals. Over the inner arch is the form of a key, in reference to the key by which the gates of heaven and hell are opened. Mr. Ford intimates that it was legendary among the Moors, that the Christians would never be able to enter the Alhambra until the hand took the key.

Cold, stern, and forbidding as was the exterior of this

Digitized by Google

wonderful Moorish palace, yet no sooner did we pass the threshold of its inner gateway, than a scene of unique and unparalleled beauty burst suddenly upon us. We were within the celebrated Court of Myrtles. Here was an extensive artificial pool filled with shining fishes, and shaded along its banks with myrtle and cypress trees, variegated with blooming beds of rare and fragrant flowers. Within this pellucid lakelet, that admirable and amphibious writer, Washington Irving, was wont to take his nocturnal ablutions, when no witnesses beheld his aquatic prowess but the silent stars that gleamed above him, and reflected their bright faces in the still waters of the pool. Pleasant, indeed, must have been his tranquil and dream-like life, amid the mysteries of this venerable and fairy-haunted pile, and sweet must be his lingering recollections of those charming days—those peaceful and delicious nights.

This capacious Moorish *patio* is surrounded with a delicate colonnade, supported by marble pillars and fretted horse-shoe arches, and surmounted with a modern roofing of red earthenware tiles, which, in a considerable degree detracts from the peculiar elegance of the structure. Passing through a curious antechamber, we entered the magical precincts of the Court of Lions. To give an adequate idea of this extraordinary and bewitching spot, we frankly confess to be a task entirely beyond our powers. It is one of those few remarkable places that not only equalled but surpassed my most sanguine expectations. It is one hundred and

Digitized by Google

twenty feet in length by sixty in width. Around it runs an exquisite corridor, upheld by more than one hundred columns of white marble. At each of its longitudinal sides is an elaborate and beautiful portico jutting out into the court, and resembling a little grove of clustering pillars. In the centre of the neatly-paved area is a handsome fountain, consisting of a massive vase of alabaster, reposing upon the backs of twelve stone lions grouped around it. These animals are sculptured in a rude and uncouth manner, and have been sadly mutilated by visitors, who have broken and carried off a number of their ears and noses, as lasting and interesting relics of the spot.

Several of the most splendid saloons of the Alhambra are entered from the gallery of this court. On the right is the famous chamber of the Abencerrages. In the basin of the fountain are some suspicious-looking red stains, which are generally supposed by the credulous to have been caused by the blood of the hostages, who are said to have been slaughtered here by the express orders of Boabdil. Whether such was actually the case or not, every one who sees these crimson stains, feels that the associations which they inevitably recall, add in no small measure to the romantic interest of the place. The roof of this apartment is magnificent, and being starred, gilded, and adorned with innumerable pendants of striking hues, it reminds one of the marvellous ceiling of a grotto, the effect of which is both novel and bewildering in the eyes of the observer.

Digitized by Google

Emerging from this chamber we next entered the Hall of Justice. This consists of three contiguous apartments opening into each other, the spanning arches of which are beautifully embroidered with stucco tracery, and decorated with the quaint inscriptions of the Moors. The ceilings of this hall are painted in a grotesque manner, representing animals, birds, edifices, and human figures, fantastically jumbled together, and presenting an enigma to all who behold them. Ten Moors with turbans and long beards, calmly reposing themselves upon a divan, have given its name to this apartment. The countenances of these supposed judges are noble and majestic, while their complexions are much fairer than those of their descendants of the present day, though it is reasonable to presume that time may in a great degree have softened or withdrawn the original colours.

We now directed our steps to the Hall of the Two Sisters, the stalactite dome of which has been so much admired for its matchless elegance and symmetry, being superior in richness to any other in the edifice. From this splendid chamber, we descended into the beautiful "Patio de Linderaja." Here we found a marble fountain, throwing its silvery waters into the air, from the midst of parterres, and the shade of blossoming trees. On one side of the court the gallery was sadly dilapidated, adding much to the impressiveness of the scene, and recalling to our minds the sad memories of former times. By a long corridor we passed from this lonely *patio* into the "Toilet Chamber of the Queen," and

Digitized by Google

from thence into the apartments of the royal Baths. We next visited the Mosque, and then, by means of a noble gallery, we entered the "Court of Myrtles," which, the reader will remember, had been our original starting place.

Such was the result and impression of our first visit to the Alhambra! So much has been said and written of the history and legends of this extraordinary palace, that it is utterly in vain for us to attempt to add anything of importance to the accumulated lore. It is a spot hallowed in our memories. Within its grey and massive walls, we have spent many a sweet and happy hour. It was our daily place of resort, both at morning and at holy eve. We have wandered through its echoing courts in the solemn stillness of moonlight, which is the fittest time to behold this magic structure, whose *patios* and chambers and running corridors, expand, in the pale light of evening, into proportions of colossal size. Visit it at the midnight hour, and then, while the world beneath you is asleep, think of the unhappy destiny of the fallen Moor. From the pinnacle of greatness and fame he has fallen into degradation and obscurity. His fate is an example, a lesson, and a warning. The victim of luxury, the powers of his manhood declined; the muscles of his arm withered, and lost their force: the fires of his nature became exhausted, and the brilliancy of his eyes grew dim. He was unfitted for war any more, and after a long, a fierce, but at last, unsuccessful struggle, he sank

Digitized by Google

down a miserable captive, at the feet of his triumphant conqueror.

The most interesting place, after the Alhambra, which attracts the attention of visitors, is the royal villa known as the *Generalife*. This is separated from the Moorish fortress by a deep and magnificent ravine. As we ascended the hill, we passed near the tower from whence it is supposed Boabdil made his final escape. Here is a little cottage, where the stranger may rest himself, if he pleases, amid the odorous shade of roses and jessamines, and regale his palate with a plate of delicious strawberries, and a glass of as delicious wine. The rustling of foliage and the gushing of water salute his ear, and instinctively incline his mind to quiet reverie and repose.

Resuming our walk, Bensaken pointed out to us the tower in which the three lovely princesses, Zayda, Zorayda, and Zorahayda were imprisoned by their tyrannical and cruel father. Finally, we threaded our way through a narrow lane, lined with tall and stately cypress trees, which brought us to the very gate of the villa. We were admitted without delay, into the mysteries of this charming retreat, by a comely woman, who seemed to have in her hands the exclusive charge of the mansion and grounds. The court into which we were immediately ushered, was of considerable length, while, through the midst of it, the raging stream of the Darro dashed through an artificial canal, overarched with bowers of cypress, and decorated along its

Digitized by Google

banks with orange and myrtle trees, interspersed with plants and flowers of many curious kinds. From the open gallery on one side, an extensive view is afforded of the delicious landscape below, variegated with the vast and sombre pile of the Alhambra, the red roofs of the clustered city, and the crowning dome of the lofty and gigantic cathedral. The villa contains a number of old paintings, none of which, however, are particularly deserving of praise. The greater proportion of them are mere rubbish.

The inner garden, which we entered after having concluded our exploration of the mansion, is a perfect gem of floral beauty. Its cypresses, which are of great age and enormous size, have been trained into arbours and ornamental forms, surpassing anything of the kind we had previously seen in Spain. The legendary "trysting place" of Boabdil's queen with her reputed lover, Albin Hamed, the Abencerrage, is still shown, and is moreover regarded with peculiar interest by the credulous stranger.

Near this sacred spot is a flight of marble steps, leading to the top of the terrace, where a steep path winds up the hill to the "Silla del Moro," or, "chair of the Moor," from whence Boabdil was wont to survey the broad surface of the sweeping Vega below. Nothing here remains, at present, but a decayed and mouldering ruin. Having feasted our eyes for a few moments upon the ravishing spectacle, and glanced with sad remembrances at the gentle hill in the distance, consecrated by "the last sigh of the Moor," we straightway

Digitized by Google

returned to the city. While passing through the cypress avenue, whom should we encounter but the mysterious French lady, in company with a supercilious gentleman, whose mouth was shaded by a huge mustache, and whom we immediately conjectured to be the unknown Count, who, Velasquez, our landlord, had given us to understand, was daily expected.

Bensaken now proposed that we should visit the cathedral, to which we immediately acceded. This edifice did not fully answer our expectations, though it is considered by the inhabitants of Granada, not only the most magnificent, but the most ancient in the kingdom. Though we were not so much struck with admiration as we had been at Toledo and Seville, yet we were impressed with a profound sense of awe, on entering the royal chapel in which are entombed the ashes of those two greatest sovereigns of Spain—the chivalrous Ferdinand and noble-minded Isabella. It was the dying wish of the illustrious Queen that she might be buried in Granada, which she poetically styled "the brightest jewel of her crown." Well was the mission of these great monarchs accomplished; and now that their earthly course is for ever ended, it seems peculiarly appropriate, that the spot from which they finally drove the haughty Moors, after so many years of valiant warfare, should now be the scene of their quiet grave! Over the cell in which their remains are concealed, are two superb sepulchres of fine alabaster, elaborately and beautifully carved, and representing on their

Digitized by Google

upper surfaces the full-length figures of the majestic sovereigns reclining upon couches, with their robes of royalty gathered about them, and their eyelids closed as if in the enjoyment of a tranquil slumber. A sweet smile appears to shed a halo over the benign countenance of Isabella, giving to the cold and senseless stone the soft semblance of life. We afterwards descended with lanterns into the subterranean vault, the entrance of which was so extremely narrow, that we were obliged to stoop very low in order to pass beneath it. Here were the lead coffins of Ferdinand and his consort, strongly bound with bands of iron. The letter F. upon that of the king was the only distinguishing mark we noticed. In other respects they were precisely similar. It was a deeply solemn and interesting spectacle. The glory of past centuries, departed, we fear, for ever, rose like a majestic ghost, in awful sublimity, before us. Memories of Spain, as she was in the days of her grandeur and pride, passed like a gloomy and shadowy procession through our minds. The discovery of America and the conquest of Granada, recalled themselves instinctively to our remembrance, and then how appalling and strange was the impression we received, when, in association with these magnificent events, we thought of the great monarchs by whose genius and enterprise they were accomplished, and then cast our eyes suddenly upon the leaden coffins at our feet, within whose narrow compass was contained all, save the phantom of fame, that remained of their feverish existence in this world. Eight feet by two

Digitized by Google

is the extent of their royal dominion now. They who once sat upon the gorgeous throne of Spain, and moved in robes of dazzling splendour through the august palaces of the land, filling the earth with the renown of their mighty deeds, are wrapt in a dreamless sleep, from which only the trump of the Eternal can ever awaken them!

Leaving this dismal place of the dead with a sincerer feeling of our own insignificance than we had ever realized before, our guide next led us to the "Sacristia," where we were shown the national standards that were borne during the siege of Granada, and also a rusty sword which was said to have been used by Ferdinand himself.

Returning to the hotel we walked through the Moorish "Zacatin," a labyrinth of modern shops, but bearing a general resemblance to the bazaar at Tetuan.

In the evening we were entertained with a gipsy dance, in accordance with a desire to this effect which we had previously expressed to our faithful guide. The festivities took place in a commodious room on the ground floor, which had been duly cleared and arranged for the purpose. All of the guests of the hotel, including the family of Velasquez and the French lady with her beloved Count, were present as spectators, and seemed to enjoy the sport exceedingly. The performers were of both sexes, and were dressed in a singularly gay and picturesque manner. The girls wore flowers entwined among their jetty tresses, and like the Spanish maids, rattled the merry castanets with

Digitized by Google

their fingers. The dances generally were of a voluptuous character, and seemed to denote a total want of modesty among the females. Notwithstanding, however, the impropriety of their gestures, yet they are remarkably pure at heart and perhaps more unapproachable by the arts of the accomplished libertine than are the maidens of any civilized race. This incongruity has been observed by every one who has seen much of the gipsies, and can only be accounted for by a careful examination into the peculiar superstitions by which this mysterious people are controlled and governed.

The dances were ruder and less graceful than those practised by the Spaniards, yet there was a fascination about them which riveted the attention, though it failed to gratify the taste. It was a weird-like festival, and needed only a bluish and supernatural light, to make one fancy himself among the lost ones of the infernal regions. As they danced they sang strange songs in their own wild language, the sonorous strains of which rang in our ears for weeks afterwards. Occasionally the tones were harsh and terrible, and then again as soft and pleasing as the music of a lute—now they rose into the height of misery and despair, and then seemed to express the marvellous sweetness and tenderness of love. The effect was powerful in the extreme. We were transported with the magic of these rare and delicious sounds, falling upon our ears like the unknown melody of another sphere. Ronalds was in ecstasies, and longed for Pascual upon whom to pour out his sympathies. Indeed,

Digitized by Google

so wonderfully had the music wrought upon his phlegmatic nature, that he became for a brief period quite sentimental, and initiated me into several important secrets of his past life.

Soon after breakfast, next morning, we set out on horseback, in company with several Spanish gentlemen, to ride over the beautiful Vega, to the famous, but dilapidated town of Santa Fé. The memory of this delightful excursion is as fresh before me as if it had occurred but yesterday. How clear and brilliant was the azure canopy above us! how pure and indescribably transparent the atmosphere, and how grand and lovely, beyond conception, the glorious scenery that stretched away on every side! The fertility of the Vega, as well as the extraordinary variety of its productions, afforded me the most agreeable surprise. Groves of orange and pomegranates, and blooming fields of waving grain, interspersed with snowy villas and sparkling towns, and watered with numberless brooks and running streams, all inclosed like an Eden, by an eternal wall of towering mountains, constituted a matchless scene of beauty, that could not fail to stamp itself indelibly upon the memory of the beholder.

One of my companions was a very strange and remarkable young man, whose conversation and reckless character excited my interest in the highest degree. His name was Arnaldo, and he was a native of Granada. His parents were both dead: his father, who was of noble extraction, had left him in possession of a considerable fortune. This,

Digitized by Google

however, by a course of dissipation and extravagance he had well nigh exhausted, though sufficient was still left him to satisfy every rational desire for the present. I could not but admire as well as pity him, notwithstanding the many faults and artificial vices that surrounded him, and which were rapidly drawing both his body and soul into the dark vortex of resistless ruin. He was by nature magnanimous and noble, generous, affectionate, kind, and good, but his faculties had from childhood been undisciplined or unchecked, and had grown to their maturity in consequence, tangled and confused, like the vine-bound bushes of a wild and unproductive thicket. His health was extremely delicate, an evident result of the free and unrestrained life he had led. Upon my asking him why he did not practise more prudence, he answered me, as nearly as I can remember, as follows :—

"You ask me why I am not more cautious and attentive to the requirements of health? My dear friend, I assure you that it would make but little difference—my fate is already decided. The physicians have warned me to be exceedingly prudent, but I should only gain a few anxious and tedious months by a faithful compliance with their well-meant but useless advice. They have told me that my lungs are seriously diseased, and that it will not be possible for me in any case to live for more than two years longer, and that if I am not very careful, I must die before half of that period shall have expired. So you will perceive that it is only a matter

Digitized by Google

of time, and what signifies it to me whether my death takes place this year or the next? I do not fear to die! on the contrary, I feel ready at any moment to take my departure from this world. I have drunk the cup of pleasure to the very dregs, and it seems as if I had exhausted the sources of every human enjoyment. I believe that ennui would drive me to suicide or madness, if I were obliged to amuse my wretched life for many years to come. I am admitted to the best society, and have still as much money as I desire, yet nothing gives me any satisfaction or joy. I am convinced that it will be better for me, and better for my friends, when all is over, and my sufferings are ended for ever! If there is another state of existence, I am prepared to meet it; if there is not, then my state will only be the same as before I was born, and my condition far preferable to the gloom and misery of the present. Even if I could extend my life by a wish, that wish would never be breathed!"

At the expiration of an hour we entered the wretched and poverty-stricken town of Santa Fé. This place, it will be remembered, was founded by Ferdinand and Isabella during the protracted and arduous contest which they waged against the Moors, and here, throughout the memorable siege which terminated in the conquest of Granada, the Spanish court was established. From this spot, moreover, Columbus was despatched on the gigantic mission of discovering the new world.

Digitized by Google

As we passed through the deserted streets, several damsels whom curiosity had attracted to the balconies, waved their handkerchiefs in compliment to Arnaldo, whom they recognized, and who immediately returned the salute by taking off his hat and gracefully bowing to them from his saddle.

As the present town of Santa Fé is entirely devoid of attractions, save those of historical association, we tarried but a few moments, and then sallied forth from the gates on our return to the city. With the speed of a bird we glided over the enchanting Vega, and in an extremely short time re-entered the gates of Granada. Seeking the cool and delicious groves of the Alhambra, we there regaled ourselves upon a feast of ripe and luscious strawberries, and wiled away several hours in pleasant conversation and indolent repose. During the evening an incident occurred which, though of a trifling nature in itself, admirably illustrates one of the peculiarities of the Spanish character. We repaired to a certain *café* which had been our usual resort for several evenings previous. If it can possibly be avoided, a true Spaniard will never allow a stranger to settle a bill in his presence. He not only considers it his duty, but he moreover insists upon the privilege of paying all charges himself. This, however, no person of just feelings will long allow. On the present occasion Ronalds and myself peremptorily refused to enter the place until it was perfectly understood that we alone were to meet every expense. After having finished

Digitized by Google

our ices and other refreshments, we called for the bill, but to our infinite astonishment the waiter assured us that it was already paid. Ronalds was at first highly indignant, but our mortification considerably subsided and our surprise increased, when every gentleman of our party in turn declared himself perfectly innocent of having cancelled the debt. The obligation had been discharged by some unknown person, a circumstance which is by no means novel or uncommon in Spain.

Coming from the café we strolled in the bright starlight, through the town, and finally walked out upon the most beautiful Alameda, called *el Salon*. This is truly a delicious as well as magnificent avenue, completely embowered with overhanging branches, and skirted on either side with rosy hedges, luxuriant gardens, and the rippling streams of the Xenil and Darro, whose playful waters meet and mingle a short distance below. At each end of the promenade is a fine fountain, which seems never to tire of throwing its shining spray among the foliage of the tall and handsome trees. Here, on tranquil evenings, are gathered the sentimental loves and lovers of the city, and here beneath the spreading bough of the stately elms, many a soft word is spoken and many a solemn vow revealed. The perfumes of the sleeping flowers are floating in the air—the mellow sound of gushing waters is heard, and at intervals the sweet voice of the nightingale warbles forth its entrancing melody from amid the darkness of the clustering leaves.

Digitized by Google

In the morning we visited the Hospital of the Insane. This useful and philanthropic institution owes its origin to the charitable enterprise of Ferdinand and Isabella, and was one of the first asylums of the kind that was ever established. The edifice itself is a massive structure of stone, and well merits attention for the elegance and grandeur of its architecture. The lunatics of a furious and dangerous character are confined in small cells, some of them being secured with heavy chains. Those of harmless dispositions were allowed to associate together, though the sexes of course were kept apart. We conversed freely with these pitiable beings, and were not a little entertained with some of the ludicrous remarks which they made to us. One of the patients, an elderly gentleman of about sixty, and with a very comical expression of countenance, told us that he liked his present quarters quite well; but that the society was most intolerable, as his companions were no better than a pack of fools! This old fellow, we were assured, had formerly been a distinguished general in the Spanish service, and had been confined in the institution for several years. His principal amusement consisted in drilling and marshalling his fellows, who, as a general rule, paid so little attention to his commands, that on certain occasions he would break forth into strong denunciation of his stubborn and incorrigible troops, at the same time threatening them with discharge and the severest punishments.

The grounds of the institution were tastefully laid out,

Digitized by Google

and indeed the entire arrangements were admirably adapted to promote the comfort and pleasure of the patients and tended to impress us with new feelings of admiration towards the Spanish race, who are ever kind and humane to such as are afflicted, and however fond they may be of the savage ferocity of the bull-fight, yet it is an excellent and praiseworthy character, that they never scoff at human suffering in any form

In concluding this brief and imperfect sketch of Granada, we cannot refrain from recording a little personal incident, which seems to us to illustrate, in a forcible manner, the generous hospitality of the Andalusian Spaniards. Upon our leaving Madrid, a friend of ours had procured for us an introductory letter from a lady with whom we were totally unacquainted, addressed to her children who resided in Granada. Being reluctant, under these circumstances, to trespass upon the kindness of the family, we had concluded not to deliver the letter with which we had been so generously honoured. Imagine therefore our inexpressible surprise, when upon returning one day to the hotel, our host Velasquez told us that in our absence, the Senhoras C—— had called in their carriage, and had left word that they would be happy to welcome us at their house. Who, after this, can have the effrontery to say that the hospitality of the Spaniards consists in mere words and signifies nothing? On the contrary, I have always found them more sincere than any people among whom I have yet been thrown.

Digitized by Google

Calling without delay upon the ladies, we were received with the utmost cordiality and kindness. One of the daughters had an extremely sweet and fascinating expression of countenance, while her easy and graceful manners added a perfect charm to her appearance.

My boon companion Ronalds took the diligence one morning for Madrid, leaving me alone—alone, I may almost say in the midst of Paradise! So gloomy were my feelings after the departure of my friend, that I determined no longer to remain in a place where every object of interest and of beauty, only served to increase the sentiment of isolation and solitude that overpowered me.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XX.

DEPARTURE FROM GRANADA, AND JOURNEY BY SEA TO VALENCIA—SCENES IN THE ROMANTIC CITY OF THE CID, AND JOURNEY FROM THENCE TO BARCELONA—THE FESTIVAL OF "CORPUS CHRISTI," AND THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL TO SPAIN AND THE READER.

It was at midnight that I took my final departure from Granada. The moon was riding in lonely splendour through the silent heavens, and the mountain tops were radiant with the calm and mystic light. A rustling breeze stirred the dewy foliage, while the trembling strains of the nightingale, rising and falling in tones of exquisite melody, broke occasionally upon the ear: rapidly we rolled on, passing over the voluptuous plain, and penetrating the rugged defiles of the hills. At length we reached the flourishing town of Loja, where we halted to partake of a hasty breakfast. In former times, this was a stronghold of immense importance, which

Digitized by Google

bravely sustained itself against many severe sieges, but which was eventually compelled to yield to the chivalrous Ferdinand, who took possession of it in the year 1488.

Towards sunset we approached Malaga, which, as beheld from the mountain heights over which we were continually winding in easy curves, presented an exceedingly beautiful and impressive scene. Descending into the city we sought at once the comfortable quarters of the Alameda hotel. The road over which we had journeyed had been recently beset with banditti, on which account our diligence had been accompanied throughout the entire route by an escort of six cavalry guards: only three evenings previous a robbery had taken place, and through the ill-timed and foolish resistance of one of the passengers, several of the party had been severely wounded, in addition to being rifled of their money, watches, and other valuables. Two men were afterwards shot on suspicion of having been connected with the brigands, though the proofs brought against them were so slight that their guilt in the opinion of many was a matter of considerable doubt.

On the following afternoon I embarked on board one of the Spanish coast steamers for Valencia; and early the next morning our vessel dropped anchor in the spacious and picturesque Bay of Almeria. As soon as breakfast was over, I went ashore with some gentlemen, whose acquaintance I had made during the previous evening, and we took a delightful ramble together through the noiseless streets and pleasant

Digitized by Google

environs of the town. The houses generally were low, and built very much like those at Tangiers, while the complexions of those of the inhabitants whom we saw, were quite as brown as those of the Barbary Moors. Under the Romans, Almeria was a place of great importance and of extensive commerce with the East. Falling into the hands of the Moors, it degenerated into a city of free-booters and pirates, who swept the coast with their galleys, and enriched themselves with the spoils and plunder of the sea. According to an Arabian bard, the province of Almeria was formerly "a land, where if thou walkest, the stones are pearls, the dust, gold, and the gardens, paradise." Alas! that its glory should so sadly have departed, leaving so poor and insignificant a wreck behind. Its commerce is confined chiefly at present to the product of its lead mines, which are said to be inexhaustible, and if properly worked, could not fail to yield an enormous revenue. It really seems as if the people were poor, because the country is rich. There is a total lack of industry and enterprise, without which the most fertile lands soon become as profitless as the sands of the desert. In the rear of this withered city rises a steep hill, upon the summit of which stands the melancholy ruin of an old Moorish castle, while up and down the precipitous and rocky heights, extends the line of ancient walls, the effect of which, as seen from the water, adds much to the romantic beauty of the landscape.

Towards evening our steamer got once more under weigh,

Digitized by Google

and calmly and majestically we glided over the quiet waters of the Mediterranean, while the gigantic hills of the rock-bound coast, stood in magnificent relief upon our left, their summits refulgent with the hues of the dying day. At day-break we entered the celebrated harbour of Cartagena.

A more superb port than this was never created by nature, or appropriated by man. It is nearly circular in form, and is surrounded with precipitous mountains, many of whose rocky peaks are crested with ruins and ancient fortifications, which in olden times maintained a ceaseless watch over the still waters below. The entrance to this wonderful harbour is extremely narrow; outside of it is a small island, which acts as an admirable break-water against the raging billows of the sea. It is thus completely land-locked. Here a thousand ships might safely ride, sheltered alike from angry waves and boisterous winds. Cartagena as it now exists, contains only thirty thousand inhabitants, yet even in its present sad decay, it exhibits indubitable proofs of its former prosperity and power. Its quays, defences, parade-grounds, and marine edifices are on a scale of unrivalled grandeur, while the stupendous hospitals, barracks, rope-walks, and foundries, stand like so many proud monuments of departed industry and enterprise. In the vicinity of Cartagena, are valuable silver mines, which were discovered a few years since, and are now yielding a large return to the labour and skill of those who are engaged in mining them. Several companies have been formed and

Digitized by Google

smelting furnaces established, and there is a strong probability that further discoveries will soon be made, far transcending in richness the most flattering results which have hitherto been attained. The hills of Spain abound in precious ores and treasures of untold wealth, which only need the application of perseverance and ingenuity, to release them from their deep and hidden cells.

At sunset we sailed slowly out of the fine harbour, and on the following morning were again at anchor within a stone's throw of the strangely situated town of Alicante. This peculiar city lies at the base of a steep, dreary, and desolate hill, the summit of which is crowned with a venerable castle. It is encompassed with heavy walls and fortifications, which give the place an impregnable aspect as beheld from the sea. In the hands of the English, it might, indeed, be converted into a second Gibraltar, though under present circumstances it could be taken without scarcely a show of resistance.

Leaving Alicante in the afternoon, we reached the anchorage of Valencia at an early hour on the ensuing day. My voyage was now ended, and it was with a feeling of real satisfaction and expectant pleasure that I jumped into the little boat that was to convey me to the shore. Upon the beach glittered the white houses of the picturesque town of Grao, interspersed with gardens and groups of tufted palms. Here I took my place in a species of covered cart called a *tartana*, and rode through a continuous avenue of trees to

Digitized by Google

the city. As the distance thither was not less than two miles, every bone in my body seemed quite dislocated, by the time this novel journey, in a vehicle without springs, was completed.

The first view of Valencia burst upon me like the wondrous city of a dream. It is encircled with massive walls, decorated with turrets and towers, and supplied with eight stupendous gateways, elaborately carved and surmounted with battlements of extraordinary solidity and strength. Along the base of the walls on the northern side is the bed of the river Turia, which, though perfectly dry for the greater portion of the year, is sometimes filled to overflowing with a furious and devastating torrent, caused by severe rains and the accumulated streams of the adjacent mountains. It is therefore crossed by five substantial and handsome bridges of stone, which add not a little to the romantic effect of the well-shaded and delightful environs of the city. Entering one of the gates, I was taken at once through narrow and gloomy streets, flanked with lofty edifices and immense houses, to the excellent "Fonda del Cid," which lies in the heart of the town and is located within a few steps of the noble cathedral. Here I procured a comfortable room and secured a capital dinner, including numerous vegetables and a choice variety of fruit. The strawberries particularly were very delicious, and superior in flavour to any I had eaten before.

Shortly after my arrival, I was so fortunate as to make

Digitized by Google

the acquaintance of a young Irishman, with whom I was so much pleased, that we became henceforth inseparable companions. He had resided several years in Spain, and was now engaged in some commercial transactions at Barcelona. He was a generous, cordial, loquacious, and merry fellow—in a word, a fair representative of the better part of the people. He was much given to innocent exaggeration and story telling, (as is the Irish case with the majority of his countrymen) though he was not on that account any the less agreeable or entertaining. On the contrary, I liked him all the better for his unrestrained frankness, which gave assurance of a kindly nature, united to a warm and uncorrupted heart. Being intimately acquainted with the city, its objects of interest and places of amusement, he generously offered to be my *cicerone*, on condition that I would agree to accompany him to Barcelona in the ensuing week. To this I joyfully consented, and we forthwith began our excursions through the town.

Firstly, we ascended the tower of the Cathedral, from the summit of which a variegated and magnificent panorama of nature—including the sea, the mountains, and the garden-dotted plain—stretches in sublimity and beauty before the ravished eye. The country presents the most cheerful and rich effect imaginable, for of all the provinces of Spain, this, though one of the smallest, is at least equal in luxuriance and fertility to any other. Its climate, moreover, is peculiarly soft and genial—like that of a perpetual

Digitized by Google

spring. During the winter, frosts are seldom experienced, while throughout the summer, the noontide heats are tempered by refreshing breezes from the sea. The neighbouring mountains which wind around in a semicircular curve from shore to shore, abound in minerals and fine forests, within whose shady retreats, innumerable varieties of rare plants and beautiful flowers are found. The botanist will here revel in a succession of constant delights. Flora herself will crown him with fragrant garlands, and strew his pathway with buds and blossoms of every hue. She will smile kindly upon his labours, and intoxicate his senses with the sweetest perfume.

The extensive Vega is under the highest cultivation. Not a square inch is neglected or unemployed. No system of irrigation could be more perfect or beneficial than the one which is here adopted, and which was inherited as an invaluable legacy from the Moors. The entire plain is intersected with an infinite number of artificial canals communicating with each other, and supplied with water from a capacious reservoir above. At a given signal, some of the canals are closed by means of small dams, while others are at the same time opened, in order to maintain an equal distribution of the water, which, like the blood in the human system, is kept in constant circulation. So remarkable is the fertility of the soil thus carefully attended to, that four and five crops are said to be annually produced from the same ground. The chief staple is rice, which, variously prepared,

Digitized by Google

constitutes in Valencia one of the principal articles of food. During certain periods of the year, the rice swamps are extremely unwholesome, and those who live in their immediate vicinity are peculiarly subject to severe attacks of intermittent fevers. The labourers are proverbially short-lived, and are said very rarely to attain the age of sixty years.

Rambling through the city, we visited many public edifices and splendid structures, which though interesting enough to the actual beholder, would, we are quite certain, prove but a scanty source of interest for an indulgent reader: we shall not therefore make any attempt to describe them. The *presidio*, or penitentiary, gave us undoubtedly more satisfaction than any other institution we visited. Here we beheld nearly a thousand prisoners, under the most admirable system of discipline, and severally engaged in every branch of human industry. I could scarcely realize that I was within the walls of a prison, so like an immense and enterprising factory was the general aspect of the interior, and so happy and contented seemed the busy operatives in their various employments. They are each allotted a fixed amount of labour to perform, beyond which, the profit of their workmanship is their own. This is indisputably an excellent arrangement, and tends in a great measure to improve the morals, and ensure the future good conduct of the unfortunate captives. Want of regular occupation is, in every country, the most prolific source of crime, while encouraged industry, on the contrary, exercises a potent

Digitized by Google

influence in restraining the growth of those social vices which spring from minds corrupted and faculties misemployed.

We were much gratified with our peep at the silk factories of Valencia. The black silk which is here made for mantillas, is unsurpassed in texture and quality by any which is elsewhere manufactured. It is extremely fine and strong, and is spun with the utmost caution and skill. The establishments are large and well-ventilated, while the operatives, who are mostly females, present a vivid contrast in their appearance to the sallow-complexioned and sharp-featured tobacco girls of Seville, showing conclusively the superior advantages of unrestricted sunshine and fresh air. The damsels generally had a healthy look, while some of them possessed features of exquisite regularity and beauty. In one large hall that we entered, forty or fifty of the girls were at work in sorting cocoons. They seemed in joyous spirits, and notwithstanding the disturbance created by our approach, they continued their easy labours, singing in chorus a sweet and expressive national song.

Valencia is a quaint and peculiar city. There is an air of aristocratical grandeur and legendary gloom about its lofty buildings and tortuous streets, that calls up a thousand romantic associations in the mind. From time immemorial it has been noted for the frequency of its murders and assassinations, though since the late establishment of a vigilant night police, these horrible crimes have been com-

Digitized by Google

paratively of rare occurrence. The celebrated Cæsar Borgia was a Valencian, as were most of his chosen bravos and secret attendants. The stranger, however, need not give himself any uneasiness, or indulge in any useless apprehensions. He may reasonably assure himself that he is actually as safe as he would be in the city of London. No Spaniard will seek his life without a cause—murders are seldom committed from mercenary motives. Jealousy and sudden passion are the usual causes, and it is but seldom indeed that a Valencian stoops so low as to murder for mere money alone, and even when he does, you may be certain that it was desperation, and not avarice, which actuated him.

One day my Irish friend insisted on taking me to a cock-fight. This is a favourite pastime with the Spaniards, but one which had not previously fallen under my observation. Upon approaching the building within which the peculiar exhibition was to take place, the shrill and vociferous notes of numerous chanticleers assailed our ears like the sounding clarions of an impending battle. Inspired with military ardour we entered the place, our curiosity being now highly aroused to witness the sanguinary fray. The fighting arena was not more than ten or twelve feet in diameter, and was surrounded with a wooden rim like that of a bowl, two feet or more in height. Above this, rose in regular gradations, a series of circular seats, gradually increasing their circumference as they neared the line of the boxes, which were separated from the pit by a low, but ornamental, railing of

Digitized by Google

wood. When we entered the furious combat had already commenced. Two fine cocks occupied the arena, one of whom was white and the other perfectly black. So greatly exhausted was the former, that bets of five to one were running against him. The black champion, on the contrary, appeared quite fresh, and at intervals crowed triumphantly as if certain of victory. But I remembered that the battle was not always to the strong, and the result in this instance conclusively proved to me that the tide of circumstances may be changed even at the last moment, and the chaplet of laurel fall upon the head of him by whom it was least expected. The defeat of the white bird was considered quite certain by both parties, when suddenly gathering himself up for a moment as if for a final spring, he thrust his spurs with such fatal energy into the breast of his adversary, that he laid him instantly dead at his feet! The feeble conqueror, however, did not long enjoy his triumph; tottering across the miniature field of battle, he uttered a single chirp —then laid himself down also and died! The amusement, it must be confessed, is a brutal one, and not calculated to improve the morals of the beholders. Yet, as it is the fate of nine of these birds out of ten to meet with an unnatural end, it matters but little to them whether their heads are twisted off by the merciless cook, or whether they meet with their death in a civil warfare with each other amid the applause and uproar of a gaping and betting crowd—if any-

Digitized by Google

thing, more useless to humanity than the feathered gladiators themselves.

On the next afternoon we bade farewell to "beautiful Valencia," and rolled out of the city in the diligence for Barcelona. Our route lay along the Mediterranean, affording us at times magnificent glimpses of the sea. Shortly after leaving Valencia, we passed the splendid convent of San Miguel, formerly one of the richest and most powerful in Spain: now like all other establishments of the kind, it is in a dilapidated and impoverished condition. Continuing our journey without interruption throughout the night, we reached Vinaroz about noon on the following day. Proceeding from hence, we crossed the Cenia and entered the extensive and populous province of Catalonia. The road from the frontier to Amposta has a bad name, and has been the scene of many a fearful crime. Crossing the Ebro, our road lay over a dreary plain, unenlivened by a solitary habitation: at length we plunged into a wild and rocky gorge, which carried us again rapidly to the shore of the sea.

Now the scenery became more pleasing, while vineyards and fig and olive groves margined the road on either side. In the evening we approached the ancient city of Tarragona, which being perched upon a precipitous height, and flanked with double tiers of fortifications and heavy walls, presented in the soft light of the stars, a picture of grandeur and sublimity that I shall never forget. Gazing upon it, I experienced a feeling of deep awe, as I thought of the many terri-

Digitized by Google

ble and wonderful scenes through which it had passed. It was founded by the Phœnicians, and was at one time the winter residence of the Roman Prætor. It was afterwards totally destroyed by the Moors under Tarif, and remained for several centuries a desolate and lifeless mass of ruins. In the eleventh century its glory was revived by the Goths, who while in possession of it, sustained several vigorous sieges against their Moorish foes. Falling eventually into the Spaniards, it has degenerated into a dull and unimportant town. In the time of the Romans it is said to have had a million of inhabitants; it has now dwindled down to a population of about eleven thousand.

At sunrise we were within a few miles of the termination of our journey. The scenery was variegated and cheerful, while upon our left towered the gigantic form of Monserrat, seeming to pierce with its sharp and rocky outline the azure canopy of the sky. Finally the imposing city of Barcelona broke in majesty and beauty upon our view. Situated upon a cultivated and fertile plain, with the sparkling sea in front and a line of gentle hills circling around, with an easy curve in the rear, the city offered a striking picture to the eye—and with the deeper interest did I gaze upon it, as it was destined to be the closing scene of my interesting pilgrimage in Spain.

I shall not weary the reader with any detailed account of my adventures in Barcelona, yet the fortnight which I passed there, although unvaried with extraordinary scenes or start-

Digitized by Google

ling incidents, lingers in my mind among its happiest retrospections. The city itself is decidedly the most stately of the Peninsula, being even superior to Madrid in the grandeur of its edifices, as well as in the width and magnificence of its streets. The Rambla, which is the name given to the principal thoroughfare, runs immediately through the wealthiest portion of the city, and is not to be surpassed either in graceful beauty or imposing splendour by any other royal avenue in Europe. It is lined like the Boulevards of Paris, with brilliant shops, massive palaces and gorgeous *cafés*, superior even in richness to the most extravagant establishment in the French metropolis.

These *cafés* are of recent introduction and are under the very best management. They are profusely adorned with dazzling chandeliers—glittering mirrors of immense size, marble tables, soft cushioned lounges and chairs, in addition to which the walls and ceiling are elaborately gilded and decorated with exquisite paintings in fresco, while during the sweet and delicious evenings of spring and summer, these aristocratic saloons are animated with the fashion and beauty of the city, and harmonious with the delightful strains of the piano and guitar.

The inhabitants of Barcelona are an active, industrious, and enterprising people, and in these respects are far superior to the Spaniards of the other provinces. They are extensively engaged in a variety of manufactures, insomuch that their flourishing city has been very appropriately termed

Digitized by Google

"the Manchester of Catalonia," which, as Mr. Ford justly observes, is the Lancashire of the Peninsula.

My arrival at this fine city occurred a few days before the grand religious festival of "Corpus Christi" commenced its impressive and wonderful ceremonies Though I had heard sufficiently concerning the celebration of this remarkable anniversary to raise my curiosity to the highest pitch, yet the glory of the reality infinitely transcended my warmest expectations. The utmost excitement prevailed, and with equal fervour among all classes. The streets were nicely swept, and every dwelling was ornamented with floating scarfs of many-coloured hues. The general effect was gay and bewildering in the extreme. It would hardly be possible to convey an adequate conception of the extent and magnificence of the processions, which on each afternoon and evening of the festival, moved like a winding stream of fire through the city. These superb pageants were usually preceded by a couple of men mounted on mules, who kept up a monotonous thrumming upon a species of drum or tambour swung across the neck of the animals. Then followed a couple of gigantic figures, dressed in the richest manner, and walking along as naturally as if endowed with life. These curious effigies afforded inexhaustible sport to the juveniles, who gathered about them in swarming crowds, while from the teeming balconies, groups of fair ladies maintained a constant shower of yellow flowers upon the heads of the giants as they passed below. The procession that followed

Digitized by Google

probably consisted of from ten to fifteen thousand persons, including the priests, the military, and civil authorities and citizens. At least twelve different bands were distributed throughout the immense train, some of which played airs of deep solemnity, while waltzes and polkas were gaily executed by others. Amid the congregated throng, each member of which carried a lighted torch in his hand, we noticed a number of charming little girls, arrayed in light gauze dresses of the purest white, with artificial wings on their shoulders and boquets of fresh flowers in their hands, who seemed intended to personify the innocence and purity of the angels, and most impressively did they enforce this beautiful sentiment upon the mind of the beholder.

But we will not enlarge further upon the romantic theme of Spain! We have carried the reader with us to the last step of our pleasant wandering and now nothing is left but to bid him an affectionate farewell, and to assure him that the happy period spent by us among the proud cities and romantic wilds of illustrious Spain, will be yet happier in our memory, if we should chance to learn that our recorded recollections have pleased and interested him.

THE END.

Digitized by Google

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

An Illustrated Edition of

REVERIES OF A BACHELOR; or, a Book of the Heart. By Ik Marvel. With 25 illustrations by Darley—1 vol. 8vo. in various bindings.

THE EVENING BOOK. By Mrs. C. M. Kirkland. 1 vol. 8vo. Elegantly Illustrated from Original Designs by Dallas—Engraved by Burt. 1 vol. 8vo. cloth, full gilt, and Turkey morocco extra.

WATCHING SPIRITS. By Mrs. E. F. Ellett. 1 vol. 8vo. with fine Steel Engravings.

YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS. With a Memoir of the Author, a Critical Estimate of his Writings and Copious Notes—Explanatory and Critical. By Rev. James Robert Boyd. 1 vol. 8vo. Elegantly Illustrated with Westall's Designs, Engraved by Burt. The Same. 1 vol. 12mo., prepared with particular reference to Educational purposes.

THE OLD GUARD. By J. T. Headley. 1 vol. 12mo.—with 12 Engravings.

FALL OF POLAND—containing an Analytical and Philosophical Account of the causes which conspired in the Ruin of that Nation, together with a History of the Country from its Origin, by L. C. Saxton, with a map and illustrations, 2 vols. 12mo. cloth.

RURAL HOMES—Sketches of Houses suited to American Country Life, with Original Designs, Plans, &c. By G. Wheeler. 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

THE CAPTAINS OF THE OLD WORLD—Their Campaigns, Character, and Conduct as compared with the great modern strategists—from the Persian Wars to the end of the Roman Republic. By Henry W. Herbert. 1 vol. 12mo. with illustrations, cloth.

NAVAL LIFE. The Midshipman. By Lieut. W. F. Lynch, U.S.N., author of the Dead Sea Expedition, &c. 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

VAGAMUNDO, OR THE ATTACHE IN SPAIN. By John Esaias Warren. 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

MEMORIALS OF THE LIFE AND TRIALS OF A YOUTHFUL CHRISTIAN IN PURSUIT OF HEALTH AS DEVELOPED IN THE BIOGRAPHY OF NATHANIEL CHEEVER, M.D. By Rev. Henry T. Cheever—with an Introduction by Rev. George B. Cheever, D.D., 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

A REEL IN THE BOTTLE FOR JACK IN THE DOLDRUMS—being the Adventures of Two of the King's Seamen in a voyage to the Celestial Country—Edited from the Manuscripts of an Old Salt. By Rev. Henry T. Cheever. 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

DREAM LIFE. By Ik Marvel. 1 vol. 12mo. with illustrations.

ESSAY ON THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH OFFICES. Reprinted by Permission from the Princeton Review, with Corrections and Additions by the writer. 1 vol. 12mo.

INDICATIONS OF THE CREATOR, or the natural Evidence of Final Cause. By George Taylor, 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A PASTOR. By Rev. William Wisner, D.D. 1 vol. 12mo. cloth.

THE EPOCH OF CREATION. The Scripture Doctrine contrasted with the Geological Theory. By Eleazar Lord—with an introduction by Rev. Richard W. Dickinson, D.D. 1 vol. 12mo.

Digitized by Google

THE FRUIT GARDEN. SECOND EDITION. A Treatise intended to Illustrate and explain the Physiology of Fruit Trees, the Theory and Practice of all operations connected with the Propagation, Transplanting, Pruning and Training of Orchard and Garden Trees, as Standards, Dwarfs, Pyramids, Espaliers, &c., the laying out and arranging different kinds of Orchards and Gardens, the selection of suitable varieties for different purposes and localities, gathering and preserving Fruits, Treatment of Disease, Destruction of Insects. Descriptions and Uses of Implements, &c., illustrated with upward of one hundred and fifty figures, representing different parts of Trees, all Practical Operations, Forms of Trees, Designs for Plantations, Implements, &c. By P. Barry, of the Mount Hope Nurseries, Rochester, New York. 1 vol. 12mo.

"It is one of the most thorough works of the kind we have ever seen, dealing in particular as well as generalities, and imparting many valuable hints relative to soil, manures, pruning and transplanting."—*Boston Gazette.*

"A mass of useful information is collected, which will give the work a value even to those who possess the best works on the cultivation of fruit yet published."—*Evening Post.*

"His work is one of the completest, and, as we have every reason for believing, most accurate to be obtained on the subject."—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

"A concise Manual of the kind here presented has long been wanted, and we will venture to say that, should this volume be carefully studied and acted upon by our industrious farmers, the quantity of fruit in the State would be doubled in five years, and the quality, too, greatly improved. Here may be found advice suited to all emergencies, and the gentleman farmer may find direction for the simplest matters, as well as those which trouble older heads. The book, we think, will be found valuable."—*Newark Daily Advertiser.*

"It is full of directions as to the management of trees, and buds, and fruits, and is a valuable and pleasant Book."—*Albany Evening Journal.*

"The work is prepared with great judgment, and founded on the practical experience of the Author—is of far greater value to the cultivator than most of the popular compilations on the subject."—*N. Y. Tribune.*

This Book *supplies* a place in fruit culture, and that is saying a great deal, while we have the popular works of Downing, Thomas, and Cole. Mr. Barry has then a field to himself which he occupies with decided skill and ability.—*Prairie Farmer.*

RURAL HOMES. Sketches of Houses suited to American Country Life, with Original Designs, Plans, &c. 1 vol. 12mo. By G. Wheeler, Architect.

Short, simple, and comprehensive directions to all desirous of building—embracing every variety of home, usually needed. It commences with the first foot tread upon the spot chosen for the house; details the considerations that should weigh in selecting the site—gives models of buildings, differing in character, extent and cost, and suited to particular localities, and to circumstances, fully enlarged upon—shows how to harmonize the building with the surrounding scenery, and to reconcile economical expenditure with truest refinement of taste—teaches how healthfully to warm and ventilate—assists in selecting furniture and the innumerable articles of utility, and ornament used in constructing and finishing—with remarks upon the adjuncts to a house—its entrance Lodge—and its numerous outbuildings, it concludes with final practical directions to Building Amateurs, giving a few useful hints as to drawing up written descriptions, specifications, and contracts. The work is amply illustrated, and the estimates supplied are reliable and have been carefully made.

Digitized by Google

IK. MARVEL'S WORKS.

THIRTEENTH EDITION OF

REVERIES OF A BACHELOR, a Book of the Heart. By Ik. Marvel. 1 vol. 12mo., with Illustrations by Darley.

The Illustrated Edition, with Twenty-five Illustrations, will be ready about the middle of October.

"Quotations give but a faint idea of the depth of feeling, the beautiful and winning frankness, the elastic vigor of soul, and the singular fidelity of expression which characterize this remarable volume. Its quaint ingenuity of arrangement is wholly lost in extracts; and in order to enjoy the delicious adaptation of form to sentiment in which it would be hard to name its equal, it must be read as a consummate, artistic, gem-like whole."—*N. Y. Tribune.*

"The dreamy, shadowy haze of reverie, its fleet transitions, its vivid and startling passages—more vivid, oftentimes, than anything of real life—are admirably reproduced on these delicate pages. The dense and deliberate style, though nowise itself dreamy and insubstantial, dealing largely rather in the tough and oaken Saxon, that makes the strength of our hardy tongue, is adapted with admirable pliancy to the movement and tone of the fancy. There are passages in it—as those descriptive of early separations, schooldays and their sequel—that will start the memory, with a quick throb, in many hearts. And there are essential and permanent qualities exhibited in it, both of intellect and of sensibility, that give noble promise of a future, and that will make the subsequent publications of the author events to be watched for."—*Independent.*

The writer who can lure a few of his fellow mortals away from the bustle, and the strife, and the fret, and the wear and tear of a restless existence—who can plant them in his own quiet arm-chair, and think a little for them so easily and so cosily that they shall fancy his thoughts to be their own soliloquies—who can carry them off from the engrossing present, backward to the fullness of youth, or forward to the repose of age—who can peel off, here and there, the worldly rind that grows ever-thickening over the heart, growing fastest and thickest in the hothouses of fashion, and in the rank soil of wealth—the writer, we say, who can do this—Mr. Ik. Marvel does it in his Reveries—shall be welcomed to a place in our regards, and cordially recommended to our readers' bookshelves."—*Albion.*

"This is a pleasant and clever book; racy, genial, lively and sparkling. It is a book to put one in good humor with himself and all the world."—*Southern Literary Gazette.*

"It is an exquisite production, the like of which the press has not produced in this country or in England. Portions of it remind us forcibly of some of the old, and almost unknown French authors, whose sketches of thought and feeling we have never seen equalled for delicacy and truth, until we read these Reveries. The book is especially welcome as one of a new class in this country, which appeals to all the finer feelings of the heart."—*Journal of Commerce.*

"Well has the author called it a book of the heart. Not of a heart withered by selfishness, mistaking disappointment for sorrow, hatred of the world's joys for philosophic contempt; but a generous, noble heart, that has sorrowed as we have sorrowed, that can echo back from the distant hills of its own experience our own cries—now of joy, now of grief and our songs of quiet happiness."—*N. Y. Courier and Inquirer.*

Digitized by Google

"No one, we predict, will ever lay down the volume with that common exclamation on his lips—'I can't get interested in it,' for it grapples to the reader with hooks of silver, which hold him quite as fast as if they were made of steel."—*Boston Gazette.*

FRESH GLEANINGS, or a New Sheaf from the Old Field of Continental Europe. By Ik. Marvel. 1 vol., 12mo.

"This book should be read by all who can appreciate a style full of grace, in a composition replete with original and striking thoughts."—*Boston Journal.*

"Agreeable, quaint, humorous, philosophical, pathetic, charming, glorious Ik. Marvel! It is as refreshing to the mind, wearied with the thrice-told insipidities of continental travel to dip into his fresh sparkling pages, as a plunge, this hot weather, into the cold, diamond-deer-haunted waters of some mountain lake. We have turned over his soft, thick, dainty pages, and our eye has glided along the stream of his bright descriptions, pleasant thoughts, humorous expressions, and characters painted with a few light touches, like daguerreotype portraits—very Sterne-like and exceedingly fine—until arriving at the end we are startled at the rapidity with which the feet of Time, flower-muffled, have trodden."—*Albany Atlas.*

"A series of the liveliest, newest, most taking and most graphic sketches of out of the way scenes, character and incidents, that were ever done up between a pair of bookbinder's covers."—*Commercial Advertiser.*

"This is decidedly the most agreeable book of the season. It reminds one by an occasional association of ideas, rather than resemblance, of imitation of Sterne's Sentimental Journey, and some of Longfellow's transatlantic sketches; but its freshness, its variety, graphic descriptive power, and genial sympathies, are all its own."—*Buffalo Advertiser.*

THE BATTLE SUMMER. Being Transcripts from Personal Observation in Paris during the year 1848. By Ik. Marvel. With Illustrations by Darley. 1 vol., 12mo

"It is a series of pictures—sketches of scenes which passed under the author's eye. It is most ably done, and shows the hand of one gifted with genius and destined to make his mark on the literature of his country."—*N. Y. Courier and Enquirer*

"The book is filled with a series of pictures and sketches more graphic it would be difficult to find."—*New York Recorder.*

"Like a talented and enthusiastic artist, he placed himself in the best positions, and caught the lineaments of each scene to be transferred to his canvas. * * * In truth, he has furnished a gallery of portraits which are very life like."—*Presbyterian.*

"An elaborate history would fail to convey so vivid and truthful a conception of the rise, progress and manner of the 'second reign of terror' as is to be obtained from this work.' —*Portland Transcript.*

"It is by far the most able and most impressive account of the scenes in Paris, and reveals a power of description that will give the author a name."—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

THE LORGNETTE, or Studies of the Town. By an Opera-Goer (Ik. Marvel.) 2 vol., 12mo. Set off with Darley's Design.

DREAM LIFE. By Ik. Marvel. 1 vol., 12mo.

Digitized by Google

LIFE OF ALGERNON SIDNEY, with sketches of some of his contemporaries and extracts from his Correspondence and Political Writings. By G. Van Santvoord. 1 vol. 12mo.

"The style of this work is clear, precise, always forcible, and at times eloquent, we ask our readers to purchase, and go through with one chapter, they will read the rest without our asking."—*Poughkeepsie American.*

"Mr. Van Santvoord has drawn his character and related the incidents of his life with a warm appreciation; and he has thrown in some admirable short sketches of some of his compatriots. We recommend his book warmly."—*American Review.*

"A volume of manly strength, bringing under review the most exciting scenes and noblest deeds, and presenting characters of some of the greatest men who have figured in British History."—*N. Y. Observer.*

"This Work is graphic, vigorous, and accurate. It necessarily combines sketches of other leading characters—such as Vane, Bradshaw, Cromwell, and Milton. There are more interesting facts condensed in a small volume than we have met in any similar production."—*American Artisan.*

New and Elegant Juvenile Books.

TALES OF SUMMER DAYS AND WINTER NIGHTS.

A GRANDMOTHER'S RECOLLECTIONS. By Ella Rodman, with six tinted Illustrations. 1 vol. 16mo. cloth.

"This is a simple narrative of household reminiscences, more pleasing than many a book of far greater pretensions."—*Courier and Enquirer.*

"This book is filled with entertaining and instructive matters."—*Chron. and Atlas.*

"It tends to throw a mild and attractive light over home, and to minister to those gentler feelings, which find their best soil in the quiet and purity of the sanctuary of childhood."—*Weekly Sun.*

"The style of the book is simple, lively, and attractive; it must become one of the favorites of the day, especially among young readers."—*Southern Literary Gazette.*

BRAGGADOCIO, A book for Boys and Girls. By Mrs. L. C. Tuthill—with six tinted illustrations. 1 vol., 16mo. cloth.

GULLIVER JOE; his Three Voyages, being an Account of his Marvellous Adventure in Kailoo, Hydrogenia, and Fjario. By Elbert Perce. 1 vol., 16mo. with six tinted Illustrations, cloth.

THE YOUNG EMIGRANTS—Madelaine Tube—the Crystal Palace—in 1 vol. 16mo, with Illustrations, cloth.

UNCLE FRANK'S HOME STORIES.

A beautiful Series of Juveniles—entirely new. By F. C. Woodworth, in 6 vols. uniform style, with eight tinted engravings in each volume.

1. A BUDGET OF WILLOW LANE STORIES.
2. A PEEP AT OUR NEIGHBORS.
3. THE MILLER OF OUR VILLAGE, AND SOME OF HIS TOLLS.
4. THE STRAWBERRY GIRL, OR HOW TO RISE IN THE WORLD.
5. THE BOY'S AND GIRL'S COUNTRY BOOK.
6. THE LITTLE MISCHIEF-MAKER.

This Series, by one of the most popular writers in America, in the department of Juvenile Literature, is confidently recommended by the Publisher, as unequalled in respect to its mechanical beauty and literary interest, by any similar publication.

Digitized by Google

N. P. WILLIS'S SELECT WORKS, IN UNIFORM 12MO. VOLS.

RURAL LETTERS, AND OTHER RECORDS OF THOUGHTS AT LEISURE, embracing Letters from under a Bridge, Open Air Musings in the City, "Invalid Ramble in Germany," "Letters from Watering Places," &c., &c. 1 vol. Fourth Edition.

"There is scarcely a page in it in which the reader will not remember, and turn to again with a fresh sense of delight. It bears the imprint of nature in her purest and most joyous forms, and under her most cheering and inspiring influences."—*N. Y. Tribune.*

"If we would show how a modern could write with the ease of Cowley, most gentle lover of nature's gardens, and their fitting accessaries from life, we would offer this volume as the best proof that the secret has not yet died out."—*Literary World.*

PEOPLE I HAVE MET, or Pictures of Society and People of Mark—drawn under a thin veil of fiction. By N. P. WILLIS. 1 vol., 12mo. Third Edition.

"It is a collection of twenty or more of the stories which have blossomed out from the summer soil of the author's thoughts within the last few years. Each word in some of them the author seems to have picked as daintily, for its richness or grace, or its fine fitness to his purpose, as if a humming-bird were picking upon his quivering wing the flower whose sweets he would lovingly rifle, or a belle were culling the stones for her bridal necklace."—*N. Y. Independent.*

"The book embraces a great variety of personal and social sketches in the Old World, and concludes with some thrilling reminiscences of distinguished ladies, including the Belles of New York, etc."—*The Republic.*

LIFE HERE AND THERE, or Sketches of Society and Adventure at far-apart times and places. By N. P. WILLIS. 1 vol., 12mo.

"This very agreeable volume consists of sketches of life and adventure, all of them, the author assures us, having a foundation strictly historical, and to a great extent autobiographical. Such of these sketches as we have read, are in Mr. Willis's happiest vein—a vein, by the way, in which he is unsurpassed."—*Sartain's Magazine.*

"Few readers who take up this pleasant volume will lay it aside until they have perused every line of its contents."—*Jersey Journal.*

HURRYGRAPHS, or Sketches of Scenery, Celebrities, and Society, taken from Life. By N. P. WILLIS. 1 vol., 12mo. Third Edition.

"Some of the best specimens of Mr. Willis's prose, we think, are herein contained."—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

"In the present volume, which is filled with all sorts of enticements, we prefer the descriptions of nature to the sketches of character, and the dusty road-side grows delightful under the touches of Willis's blossoming-dropping pen; and when we come to the mountain and lake, it is like revelling in all the fragrant odors of Paradise."—*Boston Atlas.*

PENCILINGS BY THE WAY.—A New and Revised Edition. By N. P. WILLIS. 1 vol., 12mo.

This volume will be published 1st November.

Digitized by Google

FOURTH EDITION.

LOS GRINGOS,

AN INSIDE VIEW OF MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA, WITH WANDERINGS IN PERU, CHILI, AND POLYNESIA. BY LIEUTENANT WISE, U.S.N. *Baker & Scribner.*

"Lieutenant Wise has certainly made the best use of his opportunities, and given us a volume, which, for its fresh, joyous humor, its life-like naturalness, its brilliant glimpses of character and manners, and its power of expressive word-painting, we have not seen the equal of, for a long time, in our critical hunt for readable books. No one who runs his eye over the lively table of contents, can satiate his curiosity without a perusal of the entire volume."—*Tribune.*

"He has given the pleasure that Dickens gives to millions, using carelessly, profusely, and *jolily*, two or three of the rarest qualities of genius. For that power of unexpected parallelism, which brings together, suddenly and laughably, the most distant opposites in grotesque similitude; for the quick analysis of a thought or feeling which supplies material for wit; for the genial and irresistible humor which makes what people familiarize by the phrase 'the merriest fellow in the world,' we hardly know the equal of the author of Los Gringos." —*Home Journal.*

'The work itself is one of the most charmingly natural, fresh, and entertaining we have had the pleasure of dwelling over for years. It consists of a series of adventures in California, Mexico, and the Society and Marquesan groups in the far boundless Pacific, and from the first spread of the noble frigate's canvas which bore our author, to the last page, the interest is sustained to the most pleasurable degree by a contiguity of bright-colored, graphic pictures of life on shipboard, scenery, excursions in hunting, life in the rancho, life in the village, city, and on the delightful plains and savage mountains of the glorious regions through which he wandered."—*Albany Atlas.*

"It is a book not to be easily laid aside; something like a companion who talks rapidly and amusing all the evening, whom you cannot find in your heart to remind of the flight of time."—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

"The author is a person of sharp observation, and has great powers of lively description. His sketches embrace a great variety of subjects, and are not only written in a most entertaining style, but contain much useful information respecting the countries which he visited, and the strange scenes which it was his fortune to witness."—*Boston Courier.*

"He evinces quick observation, a ready faculty of seizing upon whatever is humorous, striking, or characteristic, and an admirable manner of rehearsing a story, or sketching an incident. The book is eminently readable.—*N. Y. Courier & Inquirer.*

'In the varied scenes and adventures he describes, he is entirely *au fait*, and whether on ship or ashore, 'chasing the wild-deer,' or being chased by the grizzly bear, shooting brigands or dancing fandangos, swimming with the Sandwich Island girls, or 'doctoring' interesting young ladies in fits, he is equally *at home*."—*Literary World.*

Digitized by Google

[Third Edition.]

TALBOT AND VERNON;

A Novel. By J. L. M'Connel, Author of "Grahame: or, Youth and Manhood." 1 vol. 12mo. C. Scribner.

"Altogether we like the book mightily. No reader we think, certainly no critical reader—can fail to be struck with the directness and energy of the style, the ease and nature of the dialogue, its skilful sketches of character, and the freshness and beauty of its descriptions of scenery. It is too rich in the elements of popularity—too full of vigorous genius not to have a triumphant sale."—*The Republic.*

"If we are not greatly mistaken it is destined to excite a sensation among the lovers of original fiction, and to make the advent of a new and most able American author in this popular department of literature. We have met with nothing more promising in recent literature."—*Home Journal.*

"The work is one of much originality and power, is written in a vigorous and nervous style, and is evidently the production of one who has enjoyed rare opportunities for studying life and character."—*The Yankee Blade.*

"We have read this recent work of fiction with much satisfaction; and welcome the author with hearty American fellowship. His plot, his narrative, his scenes, his characters, his channels of thought, are eminently national."—*Literary World.*

"It is written with great ability. The scene is laid in the West, and Western manners of course are sketched."—*N. Y. Courier and Enquirer.*

"The author's style is sprightly and engaging, his powers of description great, and his knowledge of legal subtleties, and perception of the nicer points of his profession, comprehensive and acute."—*N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

"The vividness of the Mexican scenes alone will ensure for this volume a wide circulation."—*Albany State Register.*

"The author is an original thinker, and a close observer, with a well-cultivated mind."—*Buffalo Morning Express.*

"The characters are admirably wrought, and there is an easy flow in the narrative, which is not interrupted by the artistic touches with which the volume abounds. We predict for Talbot and Vernon a harvest of rich success—so full is it of incident and the development so admirably conducted."—*St. Louis Republican.*

"A tale of Western life and adventure, constructed with art, and written with beauty and force. The author is a scholar—a man of reading and reflection, a close observer of society, and a discriminating delineator both of its outer surface and its under current.

"The story is one of uncommon interest, and in the elaboration of his subject, the author has shown himself to be a shrewd observer of men, and a profound reasoner, as well as a most agreeable writer."—*Savannah Morning News.*

"The writer portrays Western manners and Western civilization, and has, we think, succeeded in giving a clear idea of what they are. We have read the volume from its first to its last page, a circumstance, (rare for an editor,) that should entitle our appreciation of its merit to some little respect."—*Hunt's Merchants' Magazine.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google